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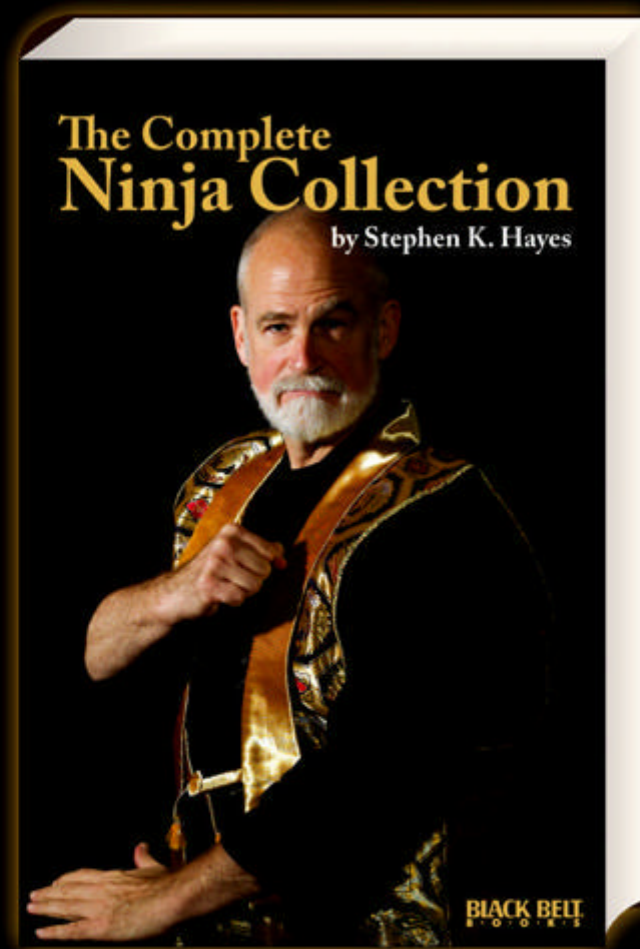


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Photo Courtesy of Artists Releasing Corp.

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VOL. 53 NO. 3. BLACK BELT (ISSN 0277-3066, USPS 985-820) is published bi-monthly by Cruz Bay Publishing, Inc., an Active Interest Media company. Advertising and editorial offices at 24900 Anza Drive, Unit E, Santa Clarita, California 91355. The known office of publication is 5720 Flatiron Pkwy, Boulder, CO 80301. Periodicals postage paid at Boulder, CO and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Black Belt, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Customer service: (800) 266-4066. Subscription rates in the United States are one year \$28. Canada: \$40. Foreign: \$52 (US funds only). The publisher and editors will not be responsible for unsolicited material. Manuscripts and photographs must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. Printed in the United States by RR Donnelley, Strasburg, VA. 2015 by Black Belt Communications LLC, an Active Interest Media Publication. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

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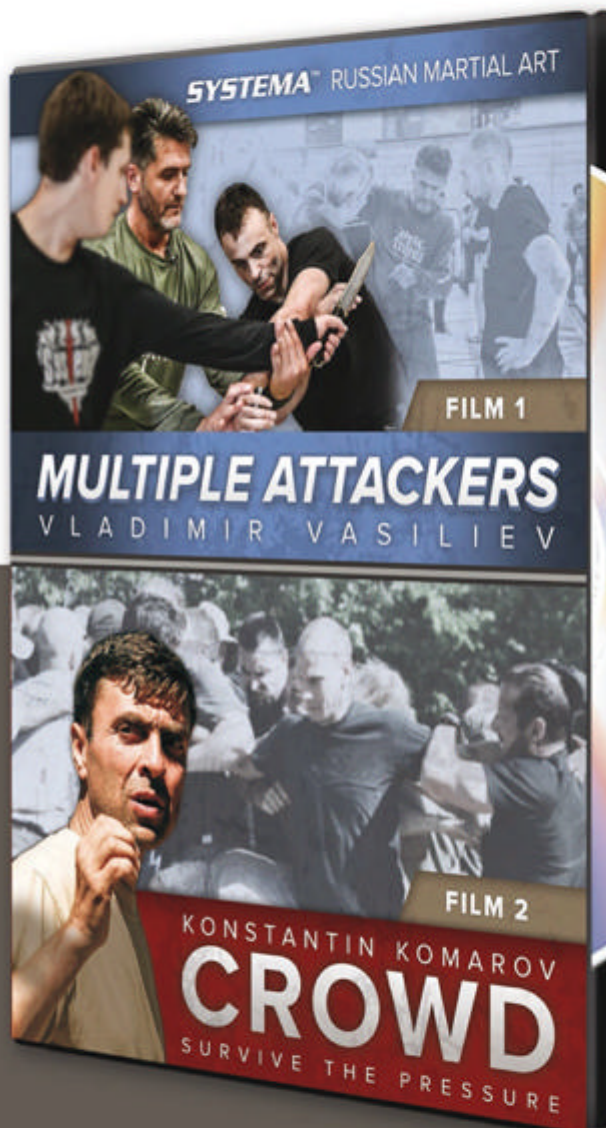


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## NEW NAMES, NEW FACES

As you page through this issue of *Black Belt*, you'll notice three new columns. They're evidence of our never-ending efforts to make sure you get the best coverage of all facets of the martial arts world.

In each issue, the Inheritance column will highlight a young martial artist who's excelling at his or her chosen style. First up is Khayman Amir McDaniels, who at 17 is a full instructor under *jeet kune do* authority Dan Inosanto and *muay Thai* master Chai Sirisute. I'm sure that after reading the story, you'll agree with Inosanto, who said of McDaniels, "When I look into his eyes, I see a 40-year-old soul staring back at me."

Our second new column is Paycheck. Each installment will deal with a different occupation that overlaps with the martial arts — in other words, jobs for which martial arts training would give you a leg up. Examined in this issue is the stunt business. Our writer spoke with "Judo" Gene LeBell, veteran stunt performer Cheryl Wheeler and newcomer Jessie Graff. Their words can help you decide whether a career in stunts is right for you. My favorite cautionary line in the column comes from LeBell: "Don't think about getting into stunt work unless you can drive cars — and by that I mean turn them over safely."

The third new column is called How-To, and its subject is self-explanatory. The debut essay was penned by Hayward Nishioka, who explains how to — and how not to — pit one art against another. Unbeknownst to many, in 1987 he took part in a session in which his judo was matched against the *jiu-jitsu* of Rickson Gracie. Nishioka views the action the way all martial artists should — as a learning experience rather than an attempt to determine which style is superior:

"Philosophically, judo founder Jigoro Kano ... was more interested in the side effects that result from encounters in which one martial art meets another — specifically, the qualities that such training sessions develop in practitioners, things like guts, determination, discipline, decisiveness, courage and the ability to look in every dark corner to find the key to success."

**ONLINE UPDATE:** The digital side of the magazine has also received a refresh. Our Web team is now posting three stories a week on BlackBeltMag.com. Two are general-purpose articles covering the greater martial arts universe. The third is focused on martial arts-themed entertainment, which means movies, TV shows and online offerings. Because we all love to watch them as much as we love to criticize them, we asked Dr. Craig D. Reid — long-time *Black Belt* contributor, author of *The Ultimate Guide to Martial Arts Movies of the 1970s*, and former stuntman and choreographer — to take the reins.

Be sure to drop by regularly to peruse Reid's blog and the other posts. Or follow us on social media ([facebook.com/BlackBeltMagazine](https://www.facebook.com/BlackBeltMagazine) and [twitter.com/Black\\_Belt\\_Mag](https://twitter.com/Black_Belt_Mag)) for links to the stories as they become available. 🐱

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An Active Interest Media Publication  
24900 Anza Dr. Unit E, Valencia, CA 91355  
Toll Free: (800) 423-2874  
In CA (661) 257-4066

### Newsstand Distribution

For information about selling Black Belt magazine, contact [BGiacalone@aimmedia.com](mailto:BGiacalone@aimmedia.com). Back issues can be purchased from Palm Coast Data, (800) 266-4066



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# TIMES

MARTIAL ARTS NEWS YOU CAN USE. READ IT - KNOW IT - LIVE IT



Dragonfest organizer Michael Matsuda (center) with kickboxing champ Peter Cunningham (right) and an unidentified adolescent shinobi terrapin.





# MARTIAL ARTS MEET-AND-GREET

## RETURN OF THE DRAGONFEST

◀ Hot on the heels of last year's roaring resurrection of Dragonfest, organizer Michael Matsuda has announced that the second year of the second coming of the gloried gathering of martial artists will deliver an event that's double the size, double the duration and double the excitement.

"We had so many people show up last year — martial arts masters and movie stars and merchants and fans — that we were literally standing shoulder to shoulder a few times in the convention room," Matsuda said. "[It] was successful far beyond what we'd even dreamed, so it was a no-brainer that we had to give the fans more this year. We added a second day, which allows us to offer twice as much opportunity for martial arts fun."

Dragonfest started life as a fan event organized by kung fu *san soo* master and perennial movie bad guy Gerald Okamura. After a nine-year run, it went on hiatus. "It was a wonderful convention that brought the entire martial arts community together in one place," Matsuda said. "Gerald Okamura began that tradition, which ended 10 years ago. It is only fitting that the Martial Arts History Museum be the one to pick up the mantle and carry on the tradition."

The 2014 incarnation of Dragonfest served as a fundraiser for the Martial Arts History Museum, the establishment Matsuda founded. It packed the Burbank Holiday Inn in Southern California with more martial artists, movie stars and merchandise than fans could shake a stick at.

"Dragonfest has always been about fellowship and coming together for a worthy cause," Matsuda said. "It is my hope that Okamura is proud of what we have been able to accomplish — in this case, to support the museum."

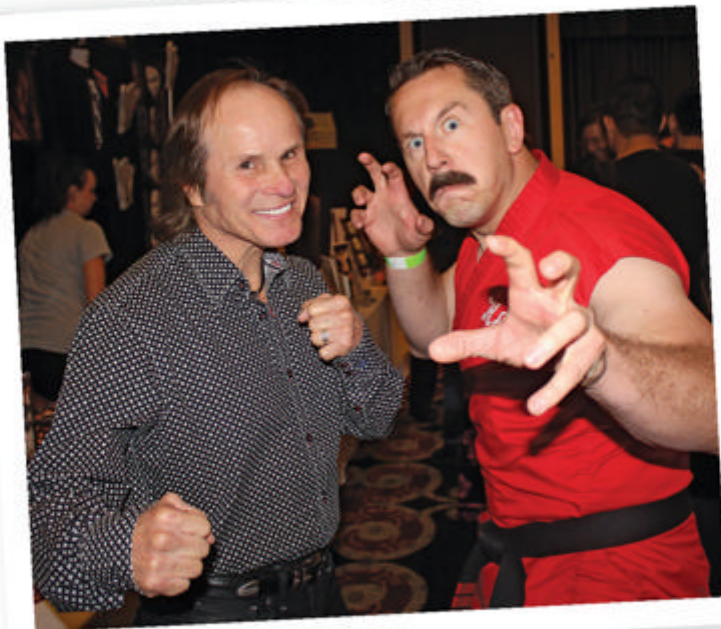
Before the mega-successful Dragonfest 2014 had even ended, Matsuda began planning a bigger, badder and bolder follow-up.

"Dragonfest 2015 has been designed with the structure of the original concept," Matsuda said. "But we have spread the focus into a variety of areas, including celebrities, authors, films and supplies. Each year, we change our fifth section. Last year was special effects; this year will be unique shops such as toys, jewelry, shirts and more. Adding this variety, rather than focusing on one area, breaks it up and provides something different each year."

"Also, with this many masters in attendance, we'd be remiss if we didn't offer a series of mini-seminars."

This year's event will take place July 18-19, 2015, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Media Center in Burbank. Tickets are \$25 for each day or \$30 for both days. "One hundred percent of all funds go directly to the museum," Matsuda said. "Even if you have been to Dragonfest before, come again just to support the museum." For more information, visit [museumdragonfest.com](http://museumdragonfest.com).

— Jason William McNeil



Benny Urquidez (left) and Internet sensation/Black Belt cover model "Master Ken."



RIP

## MARTIAL ARTS ACTION STAR DARREN SHAHLAVI DEAD AT 42

▲ On January 14, 2015, Darren Shahlavi unexpectedly passed away in his Los Angeles home. Theories abound as to what happened to the martial artist, but I'm not here to write about that. I'm here to focus on his passion for the arts, for filmmaking and for life.

It was four years ago when I did my first interview with this fellow Englishman, whose work includes *Mortal Kombat: Legacy*, *Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol*, *Ip Man 2*, *300*, *Lethal Combat* and *Tai Chi Boxer*. It was during that two-hour Skype call when Shahlavi revealed how profoundly he was affected by a Bruce Lee movie.

"That first fight at the beginning of *Enter the Dragon* was my intro to martial arts cinema, and it inspired me to become an actor and do martial arts," he said. "At age 7, I began training — first judo, then *shorei* karate, kickboxing, *taekwondo* and Thai kickboxing. When I was 17, I attended a Donnie Yen seminar about Hong Kong film fighting. I told myself that one day, I'm going to be in a movie with [him]."

Shahlavi's dream came true 20 years later when he was cast as the bullying boxer in *Ip Man 2*. Among the battles in which his character Twister took part were fights with Yen and with Sammo Hung, another one of his role models.

I asked Shahlavi what the most difficult part of that movie was, and he sighed. "I was quite resistant against one particular line, but the filmmakers insisted the audience must hate me," he said. "I had to scream at Sammo's character, 'Get that yellow piece of fat outta here.'"

A reviewer wrote, 'Hope the actor is happy and made lots of money portraying a character like that.' It was hard to say that to my idol over and over."

Although delivering that line in *Ip Man 2* was tough for Shahlavi, his performance put him in high demand in the industry. One of his more recent gigs was on the martial arts-heavy TV series *Arrow*. The star of the show Stephen Amell, on hearing the news of Shahlavi's death, tweeted, "RIP Darren Shahlavi. 1st guy I ever fought on *Arrow*. He was a great dude & a patient, thoughtful partner. Fight looked good because of him."

Shahlavi also worked with Jean-Claude Van Damme on *Pound of Flesh*, which is scheduled for release later this year. "It saddens me so much to hear that Darren Shahlavi has passed away!" Van Damme posted on Facebook. "He was one of the best fighters I met during filming *Pound of Flesh* ... and I was looking forward to meeting him again on the set of *Kickboxer: Vengeance*. RIP, my friend ... I love you."

The kind words people were saying about Darren Shahlavi reminded me of something he once said about the challenges he'd faced in life: "You've got to have gratitude and love,

appreciate what you've got and what you do. I went through a very selfish time after my divorce. I wasn't happy — drinking, smoking cigarettes, not training properly."

After gathering himself, he continued: "Martial arts can teach you respect, discipline and the way to treat people around you. Don't miss those lessons."

— Dr. Craig D. Reid



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## THE KENPO OF GEORGE PESARE STILL GOING STRONG!

► Long before people began regarding him as one of the movers and shakers of the New England martial arts community, Steve Nugent wore a white belt in a karate class taught by *uechi-ryu* master George Matson. In 1979 — nine years after he'd embarked on his martial arts journey — Nugent found an art that better-suited him and transitioned to *kenpo* under the tutelage of Joe Esposito.

As his skills developed, Nugent knew he had to test himself in the crucible of competition. By the time he was 15, he was entering the men's black-belt division at local tournaments. By the time he was 18, he'd established himself as a top national competitor, having won multiple events and proved his offensive and defensive abilities against the likes of Billy Blanks, Steve "Nasty" Anderson, Andre Tippett, Wali Islam and Raven Smith. Nugent went on to win four world championships and several national titles, including one at the Arnold Classic.

A firm believer in the notion that a martial artist's journey of learning never ends, Nugent sought out Bill Wallace and started training with him in 1999. He eventually earned his fifth degree from "Superfoot."

Despite having trained for 31 years and opened nine schools, Nugent wanted more. His quest for additional knowledge took him to S. George Pesare, popularly known as the founder of kenpo karate in New England. That day in 2001 would alter the course of Nugent's life.

During their meeting, the two martial artists discovered that each was the person the other needed. "This is the truth, honesty and integrity of the art which I was



Steve Nugent (left) and George Pesare.

searching for," Nugent said of Pesare.

Pesare was just as fulfilled: "I waited 50 years to find someone who could carry on my legacy and art. I found it in Steve."

In 2010 the two men, along with Don Rodrigues and Tony Cogliandro, formed the International Kenpo Council of Grandmasters. Their goal in doing so was to unify the kenpo community, school owners as well as students. To maintain the integrity of the art, they created a system in which members would test before a council composed ten 10<sup>th</sup>-degree black belts, then added an annual tournament and seminar series to their calendar.

The IKCG was successful right out of the gate, attracting more than 300 kenpo practitioners. When Rodrigues and Cogliandro exited the organization because of other commitments, Nugent and Pesare were tasked with managing the IKCG.

In 2012 Pesare passed away, leaving in Nugent's

hands all kenpo practitioners around the world who traced their roots to Pesare.

For Nugent, the death of Pesare was devastating. He lost not only his instructor but also one of his closest friends. Nugent had promised Pesare that he'd carry on his traditions and make the IKCG the most respected kenpo organization in America. To that end, the IKCG under Nugent doesn't charge testing fees for black belts. "There is no incentive for us to promote anyone," Nugent says. "There is no money associated with our rank, and because of this, it is one of the highest-integrity belts one can get."

Nugent's philosophies seem to be working. Last year, his kenpo-only World Championship Tournament drew 350 competitors. More than 150 practitioners attended the seminars, 15 tested and 250 dined at the banquet. When asked what he thought of the turnout, Nugent said, "My friend George Pesare would be very happy."

*For information about the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Kenpo World Championship Tournament & Homecoming, which will take place June 19-20, 2015, in Marlborough, Massachusetts, visit [kenpograndmasters.com](http://kenpograndmasters.com).*





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## NEWS BITES

► **Black Belt's Facebook** page is now at 395,000 "likes." The magazine's **Twitter** page has more than 11,000 followers.

► **Jujitsu** authority and **Black Belt** Hall of Famer **George Kirby** has written a **new book**, and it's almost **ready for launch**. It will be titled *Jujitsu: Advanced Techniques for Redirecting an Opponent's Energy*.

► A trailer for the next **Jean-Claude Van Damme** movie has been posted on YouTube. Titled *Pound of Flesh*, it's about **organ harvesting**.

► The staff of **Black Belt** hosted Albuquerque, New Mexico-based MMA trainer **Greg Jackson** and Victorville, California-based UFC fighter **Joe "Daddy" Stevenson** for a

photo shoot. It took place at **Big John McCarthy's Ultimate Training Academy** in Santa Clarita, California.

► *The Real Miyagi*, a film about **Fumio Demura**, was screened in Anaheim, California. Missed it? Don't worry. "Our **documentary** just got picked up by a sales agent," producer **Oscar Alvarez** told **Black Belt**. "As soon as they tell us what's going on, we'll let you know." therealmiyagi.com

► The **U.S. Open ISKA World Martial Arts Championships** will take place July 3-4, 2015, at Walt Disney World in **Orlando, Florida**.

► **Black Belt** Hall of Famer **Diana Lee Inosanto** taught martial arts to **Melissa McCarthy** for the

movie **Spy**, which co-stars **Jason Statham**.

► "Han's knife hand," a prop that reportedly was used during the filming of *Enter the Dragon*, went up for auction. The **starting bid was \$2,500**, and the estimated selling price was between **\$5,000 and \$10,000**. The winning bid wasn't disclosed.

► The **New York Open Judo Team Championship** will take place March 29, 2015, at the New York Athletic Club. Among those who will compete are Olympic gold-medalist **Kayla Harrison** and Olympic bronze-medalist **Marti Malloy**.

► The **Netflix** series *Marco Polo*, which features plenty of **kung fu** fights and training scenes, has been renewed for a second season.

► The **Ring of Combat** MMA show recently hit a milestone when **Lou Neglia** organized his **50<sup>th</sup> event**. ringofcombat.com

► International **karate** organizers are striving to have their art included in the **2020 Olympics**.

► The second **International Stickfighting Challenge** will take place September 24-27, 2015, on the Indonesian island of **Bali**.

► Martial artists are telling us they love the **Bruce Lee exhibit** at the **Wing Luke Museum** in Seattle. wingluke.org/brucelee

► The Flamingo Hotel & Casino in **Las Vegas** will host the **Ozawa Cup International Karate Tournament** on April 2-5, 2015. ✖

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## Meet Dan Inosanto's Youngest Black Belt

Martial arts legends are legends for a reason: They embody the expertise, philosophy and knowledge we aspire to.

by Jason Brick

Sometimes they embody those so powerfully we forget that they were once white belts themselves. There was a time when Gichin Funakoshi was just a karate kid in Okinawa, when Randy Couture was a junior-varsity wrestler in Bothell, Washington, and when Ed Parker was a judo and boxing beginner in Hawaii.

In this new column, *Black Belt* will highlight the brightest stars of the next generation. The young martial artists who are profiled have a great chance of becoming as legendary in the eyes of their peers as Funakoshi, Couture and Parker are to us.

First up is Khayman Amir McDaniels. At age 6, Khayman began training at the esteemed Inosanto Academy in Los Angeles. Now 17, he's a full instructor in the Inosanto lineage, as well as the star of two upcoming martial arts films. This child prodigy mixes natural talent with top-notch training, and even though he's enjoying stellar success, he remains as humble as a Shaolin monk.

**KHAYMAN'S PARENTS** wanted him to study martial arts since before he was born but waited until they thought he was old enough to take direction and behave respectfully in class. His father Don McDaniels would have loved for his son to study at Inosanto's school, but the drive was too far. Then the universe smiled on young Khayman: The very week his parents decided he was old enough to train, Inosanto relocated his academy to the family's neighborhood.

"It's like it was meant to be," Don said.

At first, Khayman enjoyed the structured play of the *dojo*. Even better was hanging around grown-ups, he said. "I was in a room full of very accomplished adults: Jeff Imada, Damon Caro, Kurt Johnstad and other people now responsible for breathing action into some of the biggest films in movie history." At the time, Khayman had no idea how much impact these martial artists would have on his life.

**BECAUSE THE ACADEMY** lacked a kids' program, Khayman took private lessons — and quickly learned com-

plex sets that are considered challenging even for experienced adults. He graduated to the adult class because of his ability to acquire new skills and to behave maturely on the mat. At age 8, he was among the youngest students to ever attend one of Inosanto's famous Legends Camps, a four-day event that includes 48 hours of intensive training.

In 2010, eight years after his first lesson, Khayman became the youngest black belt Inosanto has ever promoted. "I never would have thought I would be awarding a black belt to anyone under 21," Inosanto said. "But Khayman earned it, deserved it and continued his training."

Two years later, Khayman was Chai Sirisute's youngest *muay Thai* instructor. After he trained for another two years, Inosanto certified him as an instructor, making him the youngest person to achieve that rank.

"Khayman always showed exceptional discipline and dedication, and his skill level progressed rapidly," Inosanto said. "He was such a positive influence on the other children and an eye-opening experience to many of the adults, who up



until then would not have thought that such a young student could absorb so much knowledge and possess the level of skill he exhibited in the arts of muay Thai, *savate*, *kali*, *silat* and JKD.”

Khayman has always understood that he was privileged to learn from Inosanto’s team. “As I’ve aged and grown over the years, so has my level of respect and appreciation for those who have shared their love and light with me,” he said.

Inosanto was equally impressed with Khayman. “When I look into his eyes, I see a 40-year-old soul staring back at me,” Inosanto said.

Besides nurturing Khayman as a martial artist, the movers and shakers at the Inosanto Academy have helped him pursue other opportunities. Case in point: He’ll have a starring role in two productions: *Martial Law* and *Ninja Chronicles*. Both films were written specifically to highlight his skills.

**NO MATTER HOW SUCCESSFUL** he may get, Khayman wants to set an example for young martial artists to follow, an example that oozes the humility and respect he absorbed at the Inosanto Academy. In particular, he hopes to counter the negative rep some MMA

fighters are giving the arts. “I would bring back the honor, integrity, respect, humility and culture once found and expressed within the combative martial arts of the past,” Khayman said. “Martial arts are not a tool to fight but a discipline not to fight.”



The youth considers it his mission to stay true to the teachers in his lineage. “The best way to honor and pay respect to my instructors,” he said, “is to express myself honestly and to continue to walk in the light my instructors have provided.” ✕

#### TIPS FROM THE TALENT

“I’m only 17 years old, and I truly don’t think I have enough life experience to say much other than to be realistic about your goals,” Khayman Amir Mc-Daniels said when asked what advice he has for young martial artists. When pressed, however, he offered the following:

- Find an instructor and school that will respect who you are and where you see yourself going.
- Start with cardio training because you’ll need it no matter which discipline you practice.
- Think about your personal goals and stay consistent no matter how large or small they are.
- Avoid instructors who use the word “I” all the time. That individual cannot see beyond himself, so how can he help you?



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Gerard Gordeau (left) and Teila Tuli.

## The MMA Fight That Started It All

On November 12, 1993, two men stepped into an oddly shaped cage to determine who possessed superior fighting skills. Twenty-six seconds later, the face of the martial arts and the entire sporting landscape had changed forever — although no one knew it at the time.

by Mark Jacobs

One of those men was a massive sumo wrestler from Hawaii, who fought under the name of Teila Tuli. The other was a lanky Dutch striker named Gerard Gordeau. Their looks weren't the only thing that was different; the two combatants came to this event, the Ultimate Fighting Championship, a competition designed to find the world's toughest man, via very different paths. Tuli, whose real name is Taylor Wily, started sumo in school before moving to Japan to compete professionally. Gordeau took up judo and *kyokushin* karate as a teen, eventually garnering titles in kickboxing and *savate*.

Both men had been approached months earlier with an offer to participate in the first UFC, but none of the

eight contestants in the tournament was quite sure what he was in for. In fact, the whole thing almost fell apart the night before as athletes and coaches debated the final "rules" — or lack thereof.

Not surprisingly, some fighters were reluctant to sign their contracts. Tuli, however, autographed his unnoticed and started to leave the room. That's when Royce Gracie asked him where he was going without signing. Tuli pointed to the signed paper on a table and said, "I came here to party, and if any of you want to party, see you in the arena tomorrow."

At the time, Tuli wasn't sure who would show up, but they all did.

**THE BOUT BETWEEN** Gordeau and Tuli left an indelible impression on everyone who watched it, not just because

it was the first televised match of its kind but because of the sheer, sudden brutality that was demonstrated. Tuli charged the Dutchman, who managed to backpedal and then grab his huge opponent. The sumo wrestler lost his footing and went down with his back to the fence. As he tried to rise, Gordeau slammed a roundhouse into his face, sending one of Tuli's teeth flying out of the cage — legend has it the pearly white landed under the announcer's table, where kickboxing champ Bill Wallace and Kathy Long sat with football star Jim Brown. Another Tuli tooth ended up embedded in Gordeau's foot. It would stay there until he returned to Holland and had a doc extract it.

Although the bout initially appeared to be a physical mismatch, Gordeau's



size never posed a problem for him. "I knew I could beat him standing up," he said. "In kyokushin, we were also fighting without weight categories at that time."

Gordeau followed up the kick with a vicious right hook, cutting Tuli's eye and prompting the referee to halt the action — at which point chaos erupted. Gordeau tried to push the ref aside to resume his assault, and Tuli rose to continue. The matches were supposed to go until someone was knocked out or surrendered, but the ref had taken it on himself to stop the first UFC bout after just 26 seconds.

**VISIBLY ANGRY**, Tuli protested, saying he wanted to keep fighting. He said the referee later apologized for the stoppage but argued that he'd seen fighters get their eyes kicked out and didn't want Tuli to be one of them. In hindsight, the wrestler said he realizes it was for the best.

"I can't even remember the referee's name, but I would like to thank him for having compassion in a very violent atmosphere," Tuli said.

Gordeau went on to the semifinals, where he stopped kickboxer Kevin Rosier in similarly brutal fashion, finishing the downed fighter with a stomping heel kick to the ribs. In the finals, Gordeau lost to Gracie by submission — but not before managing to get in one bite.

"I was losing," Gordeau said. "I wanted to give him a reminder of me."

It was not the last time Gordeau would be accused of bending the rules. Two years later, he competed in the Japan Vale Tudo, where he gouged an opponent's eye.

**IN HIS DEFENSE**, Gordeau said that there were no enforced rules at that time and that out of the hundreds of fights he's had, these are the only two incidents people focus on. With rules or without, he continued competing in all manner of combat sports until 2008, when he retired to run a martial arts school in Holland. The facility has produced several successful fighters, and it even hosted his old rival Gracie for a seminar several years back.

Tuli opted for a different path. Although not someone to shy away from

a fight, he didn't seem to revel in the sport he helped found. Heartbroken over his loss, he never competed again. Instead, he did security work while scoring a few minor acting roles. Then in 2007, he walked uninvited into an audition for *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*. After charming the casting director, Tuli earned a memorable part in the film.

Some time after that, he pulled the same stunt when they were casting a small role in the reboot of *Hawaii Five-0*. Tuli got the role — and became a recurring character on the show.

**THE ONE THING** both men have in common is pride in the martial arts history they made together. "It was a great experience — the first of its kind," Gordeau said. "People still talk about that fight."

Although the loss remains an uncomfortable subject for Tuli, he's pleased to have been involved. "Yes, it would have been a whole lot different for me [if I'd won], but it was never about me," he said. "It was about the honor and history and respect [that came with] being part of the UFC." ✕

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## Pro Wrestling, Part 4: The Groin Guard

Every time I study a new fighting art, I look for ways in which techniques and tactics from one style might apply to the new style.

by Antonio Graceffo

For example, knowing that Stockade, a fellow student at New York Wrestling Connection in Long Island, New York, was an All-County wrestler in high school, I asked him if any of those skills helped him in pro wrestling. He said they came in handy, but once he'd learned how the pros operate, he altered his style to mimic theirs.

I was curious how he thought his new skills might translate to MMA. "Brock Lesnar did it," Stockade said. "Being a pro wrestler makes you tough — I've been punched in the face, and I've landed on concrete. People think the ring is a trampoline, but it's just a 1½-inch-thick wrestling mat on wood and steel. There are no springs. So your body becomes harder than a regular person's. With training, you could [transition to MMA], but it de-

pends on the person. I've been doing it for 10 years, and I have joint pain when I run on a treadmill. Maybe if a guy is only doing it for three years, he could do it."

**SOME MMA FIGHTERS** have as few as 30 fights in a full professional career. Boxers may have 50 or so. Wrestlers, however, are different. Hulk Hogan said that in the early part of his career, he wrestled 400 times a year. Stockade had a similar story to tell: "I'm in the ring at least two days a week, sometimes four shows a week, sometimes two in one day."

Most UFC competitors fight only four times a year. Low-level professional wrestlers grapple that many times in a week. Of course, they're not getting grounded-and-pounded, but they do take a beating.

"I always say wrestling is the toughest thing in the world," Stockade said. "People say boxing or MMA is, but in [those sports], you're not trying to get hit. In wrestling, I'm asking a guy I am friends with to punch me in the face or hit me in the back or slam me on the ground."

"Even though you learn how to land, you don't learn how to take a steel chair. You don't learn how to land on a ladder. Punches slip, and guys come back black and blue and cut up. And in the big leagues, there is no downtime. They are going 300 days a year. It takes a mental and physical toll on you."

**ENOUGH OF THE BAD** — what's the payoff for all this suffering? Looking around the pro-wrestling "school," I noted that it was just an empty warehouse with a concrete floor. An industrial fan provided the cooling, and space heaters handled the heating. In New York, both climate-control duties can be challenging. When you're talking about three-hour workouts in such extremes, you can see how these guys suffer for their art.

"I guess you make millions when you wrestle," I quipped.

"I wish!" Stockade said. "Being an independent wrestler is like being an unsigned rock band."

You tote your own gear and sleep in cheap hotels, he explained. You earn small amounts from wrestling and a little extra from merchandise. You take work wherever you can get it.

"I've wrestled in churches, flea markets, fire houses, night clubs, strip clubs, even behind a supermarket — anywhere they put a ring up, anywhere they have fans," Stockade said. "In Trinidad, I wrestled in a water park. I've also wrestled in a rodeo arena; 10 feet away, they had all the bulls penned up."

I asked about what I presumed was the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

"Every wrestler wants to get on TV in the U.S., but a big step up for the independents is wrestling in Japan," Stockade said. "A lot of my MMA and wrestling heroes, like the Shamrock brothers, Dan Henderson, [Quinton] 'Rampage' Jackson and even Dan Severn went to Japan to wrestle and make money. And not just Japan — also Puerto Rico and Mexico."

**THE NYWC TRAINER** told us to prepare to practice rolls. He warned us to



keep our hands balled up while on the mat so our fingers didn't get stepped on. I watched the guys and gals do just that as they tumbled like gymnasts, and when it was my turn, I made sure I did the same. One of the moves we were tasked with started with a handstand and transitioned to a roll and a flop onto our backs. Although I did it wrong, I thought mine was good because it made a lot of noise and looked like I really got hurt. That last part didn't require any acting.

Next, we did forward rolls in the center of the ring, where impacts are the loudest. I was pleased with the noise mine made, but afterward, the trainer looked at me strangely. "Do you have a mouth guard in?" he asked.

"Yes, I do," I answered, a little embarrassed. For MMA and wrestling, I usually wear one — for obvious reasons. Looking around, it dawned on me that pro wrestlers can't use a mouth guard because the audience will see it and because it would impede their ability to talk smack.

I removed my mouth guard and did the roll again. The eagle-eyed trainer asked, "Are you wearing a groin guard?"

"Yes ... well, no," I lied. "These shorts are just flattering in the crotch region."

"Show of hands!" he announced to the room. "Who else is wearing a cup besides Antonio?" By that time, most of the wrestlers were laughing. Finally, out of pity, one woman raised her hand. I think she was fibbing, but I appreciated the solidarity.

**NEXT ON THE AGENDA** were fight sequences. We were divided into pairs and given several moves that were to be done in order. Stockade and I rehearsed ours, which culminated in a body slam. Because he'd be doing the slamming, it meant I was about to get a crash course in being slammed.

Step One was the lockup. In pro wrestling, that means each partner places one hand on his opponent's elbow and the other on the back of his

neck. Step Two was the slam. Facing my opponent, I was supposed to do a cartwheel, and when my feet left the ground, my partner would grab me and lift. Funny part is, most of the power would be coming from me, not him. Step Three was the rapid descent to the thin mat.

Stockade motioned that he was ready to put it all together. I did my part, and he heaved me into the air until my head was pointing straight down, then slammed me hard. Because it was pro wrestling and not a street fight, he cradled the back of my head so my neck didn't break — but it still hurt. My whole body was in agony.

I lay there, afraid to move in case my spine was broken. Finally, the trainer asked, "Are you OK?"

"Of course," I answered. "I'm wearing my groin guard." ✕

#### MARTIAL ARTS AROUND THE WORLD

Antonio Graceffo has traveled to so many countries and studied so many martial arts that he had to write a book to contain all his memories. It's titled *Warrior Odyssey: The Travels of a Martial Artist Through Asia*, and it's available in both print and digital formats at [blackbeltmag.com](http://blackbeltmag.com).

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# So You Want to Be a Stuntman?

As the theme song to the 1978 Burt Reynolds movie *Hooper* noted, “There ain’t nothing like the life of a Hollywood stuntman.” A lot of martial artists take those words to heart.

by Mark Jacobs



**T**here’s a seeming army of skilled — and not-so-skilled — practitioners of karate, *taekwondo*, kung fu and other arts trying to break into the motion-picture industry by making use of their ability to kick and punch, but how realistic is this? What do martial artists interested in stunt work need to know?

**“LEARN TO WAIT** tables, clean bathrooms and walk the neighbor’s

dog,” offered Gene LeBell, one of only two people (the other is Jackie Chan) to be inducted into the *Black Belt* Hall of Fame and the Hollywood Stuntmen’s Hall of Fame. LeBell doesn’t mince words about the difficulties of doing fights and falls in films. He says with all the would-be stunt people out there, breaking into the field can be next to impossible.

“When I started in the business, there were about 40 stuntmen in Hollywood,”

LeBell said. “Now there’s over 10,000. I highly recommend getting a second job with a future and a retirement.”

But he’s quick to add that if you possess exceptional athletic ability and a burning desire to work in stunts no matter how difficult the path, you just might pull it off.

**JESSIE GRAFF** is a prime example of LeBell’s guarded optimism. A skilled gymnast and track athlete, she knew from the time she was in college that she wanted to get into stunts. “It takes a lot of effort, but for me, it never felt like work because I loved it,” she said.

Graff began training in martial arts at the same time she moved to Hollywood to break into the stunt biz. She signed up at various gyms to learn anything that might help her, including taekwondo, northern eagle-claw kung fu and boxing. She says having a diverse martial arts background is essential because you could be called on to do virtually anything in a film fight.

**FORMER KICKBOXING** champ and stunt pro Cheryl Wheeler believes martial arts provide perhaps the best background for movie work. “Anything that’s an intense physical sport like gymnastics is good, but I think martial arts, with its emphasis on physical and mental toughness, lends itself in the best way,” she said.

Although she doesn’t believe the particular art you practice makes a great difference, she said you should be able to execute flashy moves like high kicks. She noted, however, that being able to perform such techniques in class or at a tournament doesn’t necessarily mean you can translate your skills to the screen.

Graff agreed. You often have to perform for the camera in ways that are the opposite of how you’d execute techniques in self-defense, she said. “In a real fight, you try to hide your motions and not telegraph them, but on camera, you’re trying to tell a story the audience can follow, so you specifically exaggerate your movements. For example, you’re taught to throw a hook punch as a short, tight technique. But on camera, you’d make it a very wide punch for everyone to see.”

**SO IF YOU HAVE** the “cinema fu” skills and heed all the advice listed above, will you have a decent shot at earning



a living from stunts? Not necessarily, LeBell said. "I know great martial arts champions who only occasionally get stunt work because they don't have any other skills," he said. "Martial arts is one of just many skills you need if you want to make it in this business. Don't think about getting into stunt work unless you can drive cars — and by that I mean turn them over safely — as well as drive motorcycles; do rappelling, scuba diving and high falls; deal with fire; and a bunch of other stuff."

While that may sound daunting, it's not impossible to pick up skills along the way, Wheeler said. She entered the stunt world almost by accident when she got a role in a film and the stunt people, impressed with her martial arts ability, encouraged her to pursue their line of work.

"I shouldn't say this, but when I started out, we'd rent cars and take them out to an empty parking lot, set up cones and just practice our stunt driving," she admitted. "But now there are a lot of great stunt schools that teach every aspect of the business that I highly recommend."

#### ESSENTIAL ADVICE FROM THE MAN IN THE PINK GI

Still interested in giving stunt work a try? Gene LeBell recommends signing up with a company like Missy's Action Service (missys.net). These businesses operate as clearinghouses for information and contacts in the stunt world. They can recommend stunt schools where martial artists can acquire the skills they need to have a shot at making it in the business.

#### MUST-LEARN SKILLS

The art you learn to bolster your ability to do the flashy moves the camera loves may not be overly important, but Gene LeBell advises all aspiring stunt performers to augment their resume with judo or wrestling. Why? Because falling is one of the most common tasks you'll be asked to do, and those arts make it easy and safe.

LeBell, too, advocated attending a reputable school to pick up relevant skills. As proof of the payoff, he said he's received much more money for doing high falls and motorcycle crashes than for fight scenes.

**ONCE YOU HAVE** all the skills in place, you'll need to develop contacts in the industry and gain experience. Graff suggested training at any gym where stunt people regularly work out so you can make acquaintances. She said she got her first professional stunt experience not in front of the camera but performing live-action shows at the Six Flags and

Disneyland amusement parks, which she recommends as a first step. Having a professional-looking video highlight reel on a flash drive you can give to stunt coordinators is also useful, she said.

Perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind while jumping through all these hoops is your attitude, Wheeler said. "Nowadays, a lot of martial artists doing stunt work want to be the star. But you have to remember it's not about you; it's about taking care of the actor you double and the other people you work with. To make it in stunts, you need to be a team player and put your ego aside at the door." ✕

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## 4 Questions You Should Never Ask in the Dojo

*"Sensei, is what you're talking about similar to what Miyamoto Musashi said in Go Rin No Sho when he was explaining the effects of go no sen?"*

by Dave Lowry

**T**his is the sort of question one occasionally hears in the *dojo*. Of course, we can say that there are no stupid questions, but we need to understand that at times there are inappropriate questions.

One of the most inappropriate questions you can ask in the dojo is one that's intended not to better your understanding of a topic but to demonstrate your knowledge. These questions are designed to impress your teacher or classmates. The student asking about Musashi is name-dropping, trying to let his teacher know that he's read the book and that he can use Japanese terminology that's likely unfamiliar to others in the dojo. He'll deny this, to be

sure, but we've all heard such questions and know the kinds of people who ask them. They aren't fooling anyone.

Only an inexperienced teacher will be impressed by the knowledge you're trying to show off with such a question. More likely, he'll cut you off and give a curt response. If you're fortunate, you'll get the message. Asking a question to show off is insincere, and the dojo has no room for insincerity. Ask a question if you want to know the answer, not because you want to demonstrate what you already know — or think you know.

**"I DON'T SEE how that would work."** This isn't really a question, but it often amounts to one. You've been shown a technique, but it seems to make no sense. Your comment, even if it's sincere, puts the teacher in a bad spot. What are the teacher's options? I can tell you how one of my karate teachers replied when I was young and foolish enough to make this comment: I limped for three days.

Problem is, such a comment gives the impression that you don't trust your teacher. If you question the validity of a technique he or she teaches you, you have no business calling that person your teacher. Further, it's impossible to show how some things in a martial art "work." Deep stances, for example, don't work in real life. That isn't their purpose. Cocking your fist at your waist before you punch definitely doesn't work in a real situation. It's a training method.

If you really don't understand a new technique, it's better to say, "I must be doing something wrong — this isn't working for me." This approach shifts the matter significantly. You aren't challenging the teacher or questioning the art; you're professing that you are the problem. This removes the possibility of conflict. The teacher can explain what's going on without being insulted or feeling that you're challenging him.

**"WHAT IF a guy does this?"** It's tempting to ask this type of question, but it's difficult to answer realistically. Beginners often think a combat art is a big tool kit of methods. If a guy punches at you, you do this. If he grabs you, you do that. Learn all the conditionals, and you'll have mastered the art.

Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. Learning a martial art is like learn-

ing to write. Suppose you're teaching a course on writing and a student asks, "How can I write a science-fiction novel?" Another asks, "How can I write a romance?" You'd tell them they need to learn the basics of grammar, plot structure and character development, and then adapt those to whatever genre they like. Karate, as a method of combat, isn't a bag of tricks or specific responses; it's a series of principles, physically enacted, that allow for the freedom to implement a wide range of responses that are spontaneous.

**"WHEN CAN I learn more?"** This is inappropriate in the dojo under any circumstances for lots of reasons. The most obvious is that you already know the answer, or at least you should: You can learn more when your teacher thinks you're ready.

That's only part of it, though. You can learn more when you show you're ready. It isn't up to the *sensei*, even though you might think it is. Most real sensei are eager to teach more. When a person assumes the role of teacher, the most common advice from his or her own teacher will be, "Don't over-teach." The urge to impart more information and techniques is overwhelming. The sensei has to go slow and avoid rushing. Giving you more when you're not ready is a waste of your time and the teacher's — and it can actually hamper your training.

**LEARNING A BUDO** is a lifelong process. Be patient. You don't know what you think you know. Techniques, *kata*, methods you believe you've mastered — they all have depths you haven't begun to explore. It's a truism that during free training, beginners will usually practice the last thing they were taught while advanced *karateka* will spend time working on what they learned first.

Questions in the dojo aren't necessarily bad. Just be sure you know which ones to ask and when to ask them. ✖

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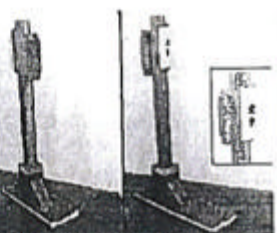
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Hayward Nishioka

Rickson Gracie

## Pit Judo Against Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

*I'm amused — and, in some ways, delighted — by the comments that still get posted on YouTube regarding the 1987 matchup of Rickson Gracie and me.*

by Hayward Nishioka

Judo enthusiasts say they're proud I was able to upend Gracie a couple of times. Any advantage I received, however, disappeared as soon as we hit the ground and I was caught in an armbar. So *judoka* say judo won, while Brazilian *jiu-jitsu* stylists insist their art won. It's a true win-win situation for the martial arts.

Although I was flattered to have been picked to represent my style in a judo-vs.-jiu-jitsu match, in truth it was merely a practice session held at Los Angeles City College. It took place before the Gracies gained fame. I'm sure that Helio Gracie, who videotaped the session, was simply testing the strengths and weaknesses of judo in an effort to make BJJ better. This is a wise move for any coach: Study the terrain, the opponent and the skill sets, then drill to overcome any obstacles that are encountered.

**IF THE SESSION** really had been designed to determine which art is better, several issues would have needed to be addressed.

First, the rules of the two arts are different. What yields a point, what's allowed, what isn't allowed, what time limits exist, who the judges are — none of this was considered before our encounter.

If it had been a judo contest, the first decisive throw, pin, choke, armbar or

major penalty would have determined the winner. If it had been a BJJ contest, the goal would have been to effect a submission or chokeout. If the match had gone the distance under either rule structure, victory would have belonged to the martial artist with the higher point configuration — which, again, would have depended on what constituted a point advantage. That, of course, would have been influenced by the referee. (Naturally, I'd have preferred one with a judo background.)

**SECOND**, the physical demands of the two arts are different. It's fair to say that most jiu-jitsu contests are determined on the mat via submission techniques. In contrast, judo matches are usually determined on the way to the mat via throwing techniques.

That means that the training needed for success in judo and BJJ are very different. Yes, both arts require cardiovascular capacity as well as muscular strength. However, judo requires a nervous system that can manage fast-twitch muscle fibers trained to contract quickly, almost violently, in order to move the body into proper throwing position and then effect the throw. Meanwhile, BJJ requires sustained power output. Muscles must be able to exert force for extended periods while the practitioner maneuvers out of positions of danger and into positions

of advantage. Some of that maneuvering can be sudden and explosive, but most of it is constant and controlled.

I'm not arguing that one art is superior to the other, just that they require different training. No doubt that would need to be taken into account if someone who's used to one training method is preparing to face someone who is skilled in the other. Suffice it to say that at the time Gracie and I had our matchup, neither of us was ready for the other. If Gracie had practiced accordingly, it would have been much more difficult for me to throw him. If I'd practiced accordingly, it would have been much more difficult for him to catch me in an armbar.

**IN RESPONSE** to all who have posted online, the question of a "rematch" is now moot. As he always seems to do, Father Time has intervened. Gracie and I — and all who continue to watch the video — can only hypothesize about what might have happened.

Philosophically, judo founder Jigoro Kano wouldn't have been overly interested in a rematch. He was more interested in the side effects that result from encounters in which one martial art meets another — specifically, the qualities that such training sessions develop in practitioners, things like guts, determination, discipline, decisiveness, courage and the ability to look in every dark corner to find the key to success.

We strive for those through our practice of our chosen martial art. We should regard this, and not who would win in an art-vs.-art match, as what's truly important to ourselves, our communities and our nations. If you just want to prevail over an adversary, that can be more easily done with the purchase of a lethal weapon. 🗡️

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** In the 1960s, Hayward Nishioka won numerous medals in national and international judo competition. He was inducted into the Black Belt Hall of Fame in 1968 and 1977.

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# Hit the Head vs. Protect the Head

by Mark Hatmaker

*On January 29, 2015, the British Journal of Sports Medicine posted the results of a research study that examined 131 MMA fighters and 93 boxers. It concluded that “greater exposure to repetitive head trauma is associated with lower brain volumes and lower processing speed in active professional fighters.” Although not surprising to many, this inevitably will lead to questions from martial artists who wish to continue to make head contact during training but want to maximize their chance of staying healthy. In that light, this essay is even more timely. — Editor*



**H**ere in the United States, you'd have to be living in a cave like Bodhidharma to be unaware that football season just finished, and with that, the debate about head trauma has resurfaced. Anyone who's safety conscious would do well to look into studies of the effect that cumulative head trauma sustained in the practice of the martial arts and combat sports can have because just like football, serious martial arts training almost always results in a bracing hit or two.

If we accept the proposition that cumulative damage is a possibility, it might be wise to determine ways to mitigate that damage while still training with integrity. Some martial arts and sports ban head contact completely, both in training and competition. If your aim in training is to better your performance of your art/sport and you expect no transfers to self-defense or other forms of competition, one of these zero-contact-to-the-head pursuits may be for you. It's the rest of us, those who hold that head contact is a given, who must ponder this problem.

**SOME OF US** might opt for the Johny Hendricks route and skip all head contact during training. That way, we, like Hendricks, will sustain head blows — hopefully, few — only in competition. The fighter's current UFC welterweight belt and proven ability to dish out and

receive punishment would seem to stand testament that this strategy has validity.

But we must keep in mind that Hendricks has been competing at an elite level for some time, and he didn't always adhere to his stay-away-from-the-skull mandate. At some point in our training, dealing with head blows has got to be addressed — or else the novelty of it will change our world when that fist, foot, shin, elbow or knee makes contact with our cranium. I'm sure Hendricks has been hit in the head during training (probably numerous times) in the past; now he merely chooses (probably wisely) to forgo it.

So if we want to preserve cognitive function in our later years and still reap the lessons of live head contact, what's to be done? It would be nice if there were a striking correlate to the grappling arts, one that allows us to roll hard without the potential for neurological damage. Fortunately, there is. It's called *boxe Francaise*.

**BOXE FRANCAISE** is the modern formulation of a few rough-and-tumble French martial arts — namely, *savate* and *chausson*. Think of boxe Francaise as the cleaned-up equivalent of English boxing post-Queensbury rules. Boxe Francaise uses a standard boxing arsenal plus an extensive kickboxing toolbox with low-line shots not being ruled out. Rather than go into the

fascinating history of this art, I will look at the three-tiered approach to contact in training bouts that it uses because it offers a great way to stave off neurological damage.

**Assault:** Think of this as the no-contact period. Combatants still work with each other, but it's more along the lines of using the partner to gauge footwork, visualize targets and work on technical precision.

**Pre-Combat:** Here, the practitioners use gear, including shin and head protection. There is contact, but it's limited. A premium is still placed on technical precision.

**Combat:** At this stage, the head and shin protection is lost, and full-power shots are used.

**IT SEEMS THAT** we could go a long way toward cognitive preservation by adopting some form of this sparring structure. Trainers and athletes could adjust for contact levels and surfaces (skull or no skull) as the competition required, and within the framework, we could still hang onto a bit of the aliveness needed to keep the game true — that is, as long as we acknowledge that we must move from the assault stage to at least the pre-combat stage.

Why is this an issue? Because no matter how much we'd like to play and train safely, combat is a contact sport, and to improve, we have got to hit and be hit somewhere down the line. ✕





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**Resistance Bands:** They allow for a variety of exercises from a multitude of angles, which pays dividends when you're practicing your art. An advantage of this methodology is that the resistance is continuous, which allows you to move with speed. In contrast, when lifting traditional weights, it's easy to go too fast, which increases momentum and reduces the effectiveness of a given movement. The downside of using bands is it can be difficult to get adequate resistance while working with speed and maintaining safety.

**Pneumatic Training Systems:** These can be a great tool for improving power. The resistance comes from a fancy shock absorber that fights your movement. The design allows for moves that are as quick or as slow as you like. The downside is they can feel jerky and they're not found in most gyms.

**Kettlebells:** They've recently gained popularity in large part because they exercise the entire body as a system. To use them safely, however, you'll need a trainer to direct your attention to the finer points of the movements. Otherwise, the ballistic nature of the exercises could expose you to injury.

**Body:** One of the easiest ways to develop power is with plyometrics. This form of training is typically done with just your bodyweight. Examples include jumps, skips and clapping push-ups, all of which are performed with maximum exertion and quickness. The limitation comes when you attempt to use these exercises to build strength because you're limited to using your bodyweight.

## Want More Striking Power?

Get Ready to Pump Some Iron!

by Ian Lauer, CSCS

**Q:** *When it comes to lifting weights, they say slower is better for building muscle, but some people insist that you need fast moves to build the explosive power that's required for martial arts. Which approach is right?*

**A:** There's no short answer to this question because what's right for one person isn't always right for another. However, there are some nearly universal truths for building

power with iron that can translate to explosiveness in the *dojo*. Before I get to them, it's important to note that there are other viable resistance-training methods you can use to boost your martial arts power.

Beyond the standard weights and machines you see in a gym, there are options that involve resistance bands, pneumatic training systems, kettlebells and even your own body. A brief examination of the pros and cons of each one follows.

**ALTHOUGH THE** aforementioned forms of resistance training have their place in maximizing power production, nothing holds a candle to old-school weight training. Basic compound movements allow you to hit multiple muscle groups at once while pushing to failure. Initially, you may think that "failure" is a bad thing, but it's a very good thing in power development because it forces your body to adapt by building muscle to meet the new demands you're placing on it.

Power is a product of strength and speed. This means that to be more powerful, you need to increase your speed and/or strength. You can up your speed through plyometric training,



but an equally viable method entails practicing your martial arts techniques with an eye on quickness. For the best results, do this while paying attention to relaxation and flexibility. Undue muscle tension will sabotage your efforts to generate and develop speed because it pits one muscle against another. A key to minimizing tension is maximizing flexibility. When your muscles are sufficiently elongated to complete the movement you're about to do and they're as relaxed as possible, you'll have the fastest and most powerful technique possible.

**WEIGHT TRAINING** is an obvious choice for building the strength component of power, but many folks — martial artists included — overlook its raw power-production capabilities. Your muscles are composed of two fibers: fast twitch and slow twitch. Can you guess which is more "powerful?" Right, the fast-twitch fibers. When you weight-train properly, massive increases in fast-twitch muscle-fiber strength and function are observed. The result is a faster, stronger, more

powerful movement — which is exactly what you want in the *dojo* or on the street. To ensure your weight training translates efficiently to increased power, follow these five guidelines:

**Use compound movements.** In and outside the *dojo*, the human body works as a unit. Although exercises that focus on a single joint are important, to maximize power production, you should invest most of your effort in lifts that involve multiple joints. Examples: barbell squat, deadlift, bench press.

**Lift heavy weights.** To recruit as much fast-twitch muscle fiber as possible, you have to tax your body — heavily. That means sliding more iron onto the bar.

**Do low reps.** To be sure you can go heavy enough, keep your exercise sets short and sweet.

**Lift to failure.** To maximize muscle-fiber recruitment and adaptation, you must push your body beyond its comfort zone. Not "failing" doesn't cause your muscles to respond. Pushing to failure forces them to adapt.

**Go slow.** Last but certainly not least is the answer to the original question.

When you lift weights for power development, the eccentric portion of the exercise (lowering the weight) is when you focus on controlling the movement. It's when you really feel it in the muscle being targeted. This eccentric phase should take from one-half to two seconds. Once you've transitioned to the concentric portion of the movement (raising the weight), you need to explode through the motion. You'll be using a heavy weight, so the actual speed at which the bar moves won't be great, but it should be noticeably faster than the eccentric movement.

When all is said and done, proper martial arts technique coupled with a stronger and faster body will result in a dramatic increase in explosive power. No matter your style, you'll get the most out of your body by spending time in the gym as well as in the *dojo*. ✕

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Ian Lauer is a certified strength-and-conditioning specialist and a kenpo black belt. For more information, visit [ianlauer.com](http://ianlauer.com).*

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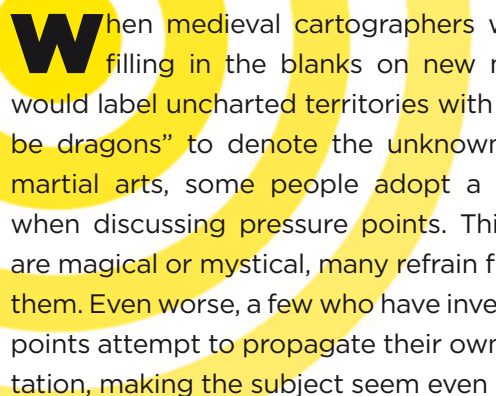
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**W**hen medieval cartographers were tasked with filling in the blanks on new maps, they often would label uncharted territories with the phrase “Here be dragons” to denote the unknown. In the modern martial arts, some people adopt a similar approach when discussing pressure points. Thinking the points are magical or mystical, many refrain from investigating them. Even worse, a few who have investigated pressure points attempt to propagate their own unique interpretation, making the subject seem even more esoteric.

In reality, there is no magic or mysticism in pressure points. The science behind them is based on physics, physiology and energetics. Developing the ability to merge this discipline with the martial arts does require effort and a good teacher, however. In ancient times, when martial arts masters were also healers who possessed extensive knowledge of the human body, things were easier for the inquisitive student. Sadly, in today’s world, only a few instructors carry on that tradition.

*“I didn’t believe in pressure points. I thought it was a lot of baloney. But it wasn’t baloney; it was me.”*

— **Wally Jay, small-circle jujitsu founder**

In Hyuk Suh is one of the world’s foremost authorities on the use of pressure points for martial purposes. He founded his system of *kuk sool won* in 1958 and launched the Korean Kuk Sool Association in 1961, all in an effort to preserve the traditional teachings. His organization grew into the largest private martial arts entity in South Korea. In 1974 Suh immigrated to the United States to further spread his knowledge, and martial artists from coast to coast benefited as his subsequent expansion gave them direct access to authentic pressure-point teachings.

An underlying premise of *kuk sool* is that *ki*, roughly translated as “universal energy” or “life force,” courses through the body at all times. *Ki* influences, and is influenced by, a network of pressure points. The uninterrupted flow of *ki* between those points is crucial for optimal health. A momentary disruption of the flow can make many martial arts techniques more efficient and effective.

As such, pressure points are an integral part of *kuk sool*, which regards them as a method for improving health, healing injuries and incapacitating attackers. In the decades I’ve spent with Suh, I’ve witnessed the grandmaster use them for all three purposes. Because *Black Belt* is a magazine about self-defense, this article will focus on the fighting applications.

*“The ultimate fighting [method] uses pressure points — **you can disable someone with just one touch.** I’m sure that Bruce Lee would have gone*

*into this field sooner or later. Pressure points are very important in wing chun kung fu, which Bruce studied in Hong Kong.”*

— **William Cheung, wing chun master**

### **SAME POINTS, DIFFERENT USES**

For the most part, the points used for acupuncture and the points used for martial arts are the same. However, not all acupuncture points are used by martial artists, and not all martial arts points are used by acupuncturists. An accomplished martial artist will know approximately 100 pressure points, while an acupuncturist will be familiar with 365 bilateral pressure points (in corresponding locations on both sides of the body), as well as additional non-mirrored points.

In the past, such detailed knowledge of the human body was guarded because the points had the potential to make fighting techniques more effective. These days, most of this information is freely available. However, because it’s easy to get confused when trying to locate pressure points on an opponent’s body, much of the instruction still takes place via direct teacher-student interaction.

*“Most martial artists are familiar with acupuncture, which uses certain points on the body for healing. **But these points also have destructive applications.**”*

— **Ron Chapél, kenpo master**

*Kuk sool* teaches that pressure points can make strikes more effective, joint locks more powerful and grappling techniques more readily executed. Along with each point’s location, the art teaches the optimal angle at which it should be pressed or struck for maximum effect.

On average, pressure points are 1 millimeter in diameter — which is why acupuncture is such a precise medical discipline. Because the surface area of the martial artist’s striking or squeezing tool is almost always larger than the point being targeted, the tool will cover the point and the region around it. This is why a given technique can produce varying results — it all depends on how much of the force is concentrated on the point and how much misses the bull’s-eye.

Furthermore, pressure points are often protected by muscle tissue or located on parts of the body that are difficult to access. Consequently, practitioners often find that the most challenging facet of pressure-point combat is hitting the targets accurately.

*“It’s a matter of applied skill. Disrupt certain nerve complexes in the body with a concentrated dose of pressure — either through a touch or an impact — and you temporarily short-circuit the body’s motor functions. Depending upon the area hit and the amount of force used, **the effects can range from brief, localized paralysis to mental disorientation and loss of consciousness.**”*

— **Andrew Breen, taekwondo instructor**



■ Kuk sool grandmaster In Hyuk Suh (left) faces Barry Harmon in a ready stance (1). Harmon steps forward and punches, causing Suh to use his left hand to intercept the strike (2) and then move the limb to the outside (3). Suh extends the first two fingers on his right hand and thrusts them into the **stomach-12** pressure point just above the collarbone (4), causing excruciating pain that stops the aggressor.



## UNPARALLELED GROWTH AND RECOGNITION FOR KUK SOOL



▶ In February 1975, In Hyuk Suh opened the World Kuk Sool Association headquarters in California. It remained there until 1991, when he determined that a more centralized location — specifically, in Houston — would better serve his student base. Since the move, Suh and his instructors have continued to spread *kuk sool won* across the United States and around the world.

Recently, the government of the Republic of Korea officially recognized the WKSA as the leading martial arts organization in the country (excluding *taekwondo* and *yudo*, which it classifies as sports). At the same time, Suh was heralded as one of the foremost authorities on traditional Korean martial arts.

## PRESSURE POINTS IN ACTION

If a pressure-point technique fails to have an immediate effect on an opponent, you shouldn't just cross your fingers and hope it eventually kicks in. You must take remedial action.

■ **OPTION ONE:** Switch to another pressure point you can reach from your current position, R. Barry Harmon says

■ **OPTION TWO:** Abandon the technique and launch a different attack, Harmon says.

■ **OPTION THREE:** "Add a quick strike to assist with the original technique," he says.

"Every individual is different when it comes to pressure-point sensitivity. That means that any point may have different sensitivity levels on different individuals. In general, though, you should always try to strike a pressure point as opposed to striking a random area on the body because hitting a pressure point makes any technique more effective."



## 국술

■ In Hyuk Suh (left) and Barry Harmon face off (1). Harmon closes the gap and wraps his arms around the grandmaster's torso (2). At the same time, Suh moves his left hand to the **urinary bladder**- 12 point on Harmon's back, which will prevent him from retreating as the technique unfolds. Using his right hand, Suh locates the temple points slightly to the rear of his opponent's eyes and squeezes (3). The pain drops the assailant (4) and takes him out of the fight (5).





## COMPACT TOOLBOX

Because extensive practice is required before martial artists can depend on their ability to use pressure points in a self-defense situation, Suh recommends beginners focus on a few that have proved effective for numerous kuk sool practitioners. It's much more efficient than trying to master all the points, he says.

**"When a pressure point is activated by a strike, it momentarily closes down internal bodily communication, which is part electrical and part chemical. This disruption can be thought of as a type of fluid shock wave that sets up a reflex response as a blow to a sensory neuron sends an impulse racing to the spinal cord and then back to the muscle struck — which then paralyzes the area as a defense mechanism."**

— Andrew Breen



**STOMACH-12**, called *gyuhl boon* in Korean, is located slightly above the collarbone. I witnessed firsthand how sensitive this region is when a man entered Suh's *dojang* and challenged him. With just two fingers, both of which were directed at stomach-12, the grandmaster put the challenger on the ground, where he cried out in pain. As soon as he was released, the interloper exited the school without another word — and without permanent injury.



**STOMACH-5**, which the Koreans call *dae young*, is a pressure point on the jawbone in the depression that appears when the cheek is bulged. Striking it with even medium force can effect a knockout. Boxers refer to it as the "glass jaw" point because it's relatively easy to KO a person with a precision blow to it. Of course, the hard part is the precision.

I've used strikes to stomach-5 with much success, and I've seen Suh do the same. Interestingly, MMA fighters can be seen exploiting this point in the ring. If you've ever heard commentators react to a knockout with "It looked like the guy barely hit his opponent before he went down," it was likely because a punch impacted stomach-5.



**GALL BLADDER-32**, or *joong dohk* in Korean, is frequently targeted in MMA, but few fighters realize they're using a centuries-old tactic. Whether the user is a mixed martial artist or a kuk sool practitioner, the strategy is the same: Use a low kick to disrupt gall bladder-32.

To determine the precise location of the point, have a partner stand at attention with his arms and fingers extended at his sides. Look 1 inch below the tip of the middle finger. Of course, you'll need to be very familiar with the point to be able to quickly locate it in a violent exchange. It's not impossible, however, for it was in just such a self-defense encounter that I saw Suh use his big toe to hit gall bladder-32 and render a man's leg temporarily useless.



국술

■ Barry Harmon grabs the lapels of In Hyuk Suh and pulls him in close (1). When Harmon balls up his fist and prepares to strike, Suh puts his left hand in motion (2). The hand circles around from the outside and lands on the **stomach-5** pressure point on the opponent's jaw (3). A moderate-force blow is sufficient to knock him out (4).



## 국술

Author Barry Harmon (right) chambers a punch in front of kuk sool grandmaster In Hyuk Suh (1). As soon as he unleashes the strike, Suh moves his left arm to intercept (2). The hand makes contact from the top, and the fingers wrap around Harmon's wrist, which enables Suh to leverage the limb to the outside (3). After adjusting his hand position (4), Suh effects a wrist lock that forces the attacker onto his toes (5). Suh then lets him sink to his heels (6) before sending a palm strike into the governing-24 pressure point, which is located just above the hairline (7).







**GOVERNING-24**, known as *shin jung* in Korean, is one of several pressure points that does double duty: It can knock out a person, as well as revive him. The common reaction to a blow to this point, which is located about a ¼ inch above the hairline on the body's centerline, is disorientation — being knocked senseless, as they say. I witnessed Suh achieve precisely that effect on a man, then revive him by stimulating governing-24 in a different manner.

### FUTURE STUDY

These are just four of the points kuk sool students learn — five more are presented in the sidebar. Even if you decide not to pursue a comprehensive study of pressure points, mastery of the nine that are discussed here will improve your martial arts ability, assuming self-defense proficiency is your goal.

*"Many martial artists are happy with their current course of study and would rather not learn a lot*

*of pressure-point applications. Throughout much of the world, martial sport is the most popular aspect of martial arts training. Unfortunately, the public believes that these martial sports are the same as real fighting. **There's a tremendous difference between competition and combat.**"*

**— Ron Chapél**

The thing to keep in mind is that while pressure points are easy to learn and then use in the dojang, success is not guaranteed in a real confrontation. Hitting the target can be challenging, and without precision, you may see a severely reduced effect — or none at all. A motivated martial artist would interpret that not as a drawback but as a reason to attend class more often. If you train under a qualified instructor, practice is all you need to succeed with pressure points. ✕

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** R. Barry Harmon is a Clear Lake, Texas-based kuk sool instructor with a ninth-degree black belt. He's also a licensed acupuncturist. [kuksoolwoncl.com](http://kuksoolwoncl.com)

*Even if you decide not to pursue a comprehensive study of pressure points, **MASTERY OF THE NINE THAT ARE DISCUSSED HERE WILL IMPROVE YOUR MARTIAL ARTS ABILITY**, assuming self-defense proficiency is your goal.*

# 5

## More Points You Need to Know

▶ Learn their locations, practice finding them while you're drilling in the dojang and then try to access them in dynamically changing situations such as slow-motion sparring. Your self-defense abilities are sure to benefit no matter which art you study.



**KOREAN: HOHN SOO HYUL**  
**ENGLISH:** none  
**DESCRIPTION:** In kuk sool won, it's

called an "extra point" because it isn't a pressure point per se. The bilateral point lies in the middle of the sides of the neck. The edge of the hand or palm is often used to strike it. When it's hit even lightly, the effects can range from dizziness and headache to loss of vision and unconsciousness. In extreme cases, death can result — a ball recently hit a cricket player here, and the man died from the blow.



**KOREAN: CHUN DOHL**  
**ENGLISH:** conception-22  
**DESCRIPTION:** This

pressure point is located on the body's centerline in the depression below the Adam's apple. The thumb is often used to press into the spot, causing pain and gagging depending on how much pressure is applied. Greater force — such

as that which results from a spearhand strike — can injure the throat and induce choking. If the airway is damaged and breathing cannot occur, death can follow.



**KOREAN: DAE YANG**  
**ENGLISH:** big yang  
**DESCRIPTION:**

This "extra point" corresponds to the temple and is located approximately a ½ inch to the rear of the outer corner of the eye. It can be hit with a closed fist or an open hand, or it can be manipulated with pressure. A mild blow or strong squeeze can induce pain, headache and confusion. A medium to strong strike can cause unconsciousness. Use caution when training because a powerful impact can kill.



**KOREAN: WEE JOONG**  
**ENGLISH:** urinary bladder-40  
**DESCRIPTION:** This

pressure point is located in the middle of the back of the knee. It's

most often attacked with a kick but also can be activated with hand pressure. Squeezing it can help you manipulate an opponent's leg while grappling. Whether you kick it or squeeze it, the immediate result is local pain with possible spasms and numbness. With enough force, the opponent will be unable to walk. In extreme cases, damage to the artery behind the point can occur.



**KOREAN: DAE PO**  
**ENGLISH:** spleen-21  
**DESCRIPTION:**

This pressure point exists on the side of the body in the middle of the rib cage, specifically in the sixth intercostal space. That puts it within easy reach of any number of hand and foot techniques. In grappling situations, the middle knuckle can be used to apply pressure to it. That can induce pain, while a sharp blow can cause temporary paralysis of nearby muscles and the sensation of having the wind knocked out of you. If struck with sufficient force, a knockout may ensue.



**11**

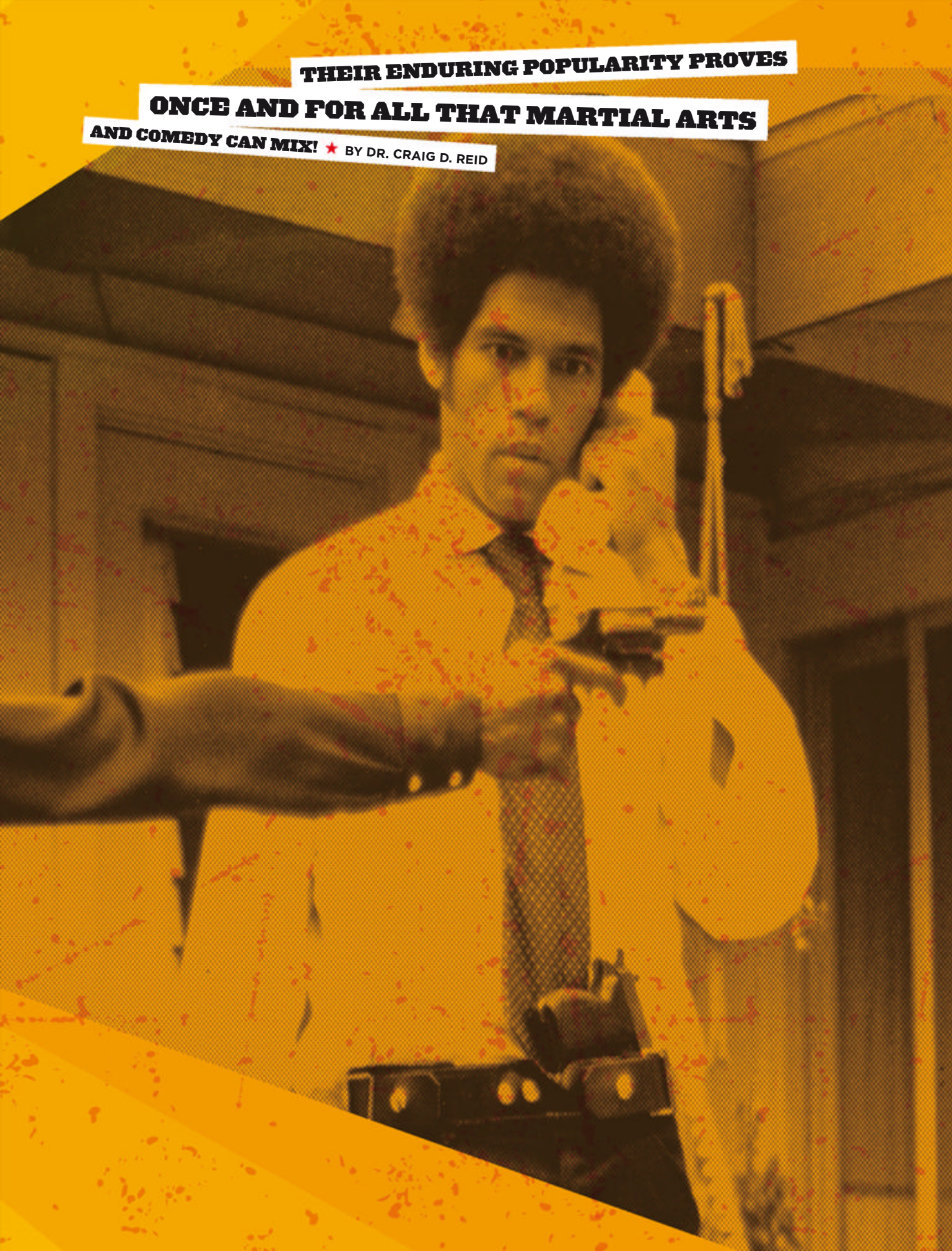
**FIGHT  
FLICKS  
TO TICKLE  
YOUR  
FUNNY  
BONE**



**THEIR ENDURING POPULARITY PROVES**

**ONCE AND FOR ALL THAT MARTIAL ARTS**

**AND COMEDY CAN MIX! ★ BY DR. CRAIG D. REID**







★ A FISTFUL OF YEN

**T**he first martial arts comedy was likely *The Spiritual Boxer*, a 1975 film that starred Wong Yu and was directed by Liu Chia-liang. Three short years later, Jackie Chan became known as the king of kung fu comedy, and in the ensuing decades, humorous displays of martial arts mastery in his Hong Kong films proved over and over that he was deserving of the honor.

When the time was right for Hollywood to get in on what it deemed a good thing, movie execs found that the path to success was not quite so clear-cut. In early American martial arts comedies, the humor, whether deliberate or inadvertent, often stemmed from addressing the societal issues of racism and class or from ludicrous casting. The laughs generally didn't come from the action — unless the action happened to be really bad.

Not surprisingly, Hollywood filmmakers eventually caught on and started churning out better martial arts comedies. Presented here in chronological order are 11 of the most memorable fight flicks that were made in America. Some of them hail from the early days and show their age. Others are obviously more refined. There's a good chance you've seen at least a few of them. No doubt you'll want to add the others to your streaming queue for a day when you're in the mood for a stroll down martial memory lane.



## BLACK BELT JONES

This movie from 1974 could have been titled *Bruce Lee Jones*. Riding the wave created by *Enter the Dragon*, Warner Bros. had the same production team make a film that would reinvent Jim Kelly's über-popular Williams character within the confines of the lucrative blaxploitation genre.

A resident of Los Angeles' inner city, Jones is a cool cat who saves a karate school from land-grabbing mafiosos. It's hard to tell if Kelly is lampooning *Enter the Dragon* or if he's taking it all seriously, but it doesn't really matter. The film is meant to be enjoyed — and taken with a grain of comedic salt.

**UNFORESEEN BENEFIT:** Blaxploitation flicks like *Black Belt Jones* offered scores of African-American actors opportunities to work in Hollywood. Without these movies, they would have been limited to a few stereotyped roles in mainstream films.



## A FISTFUL OF YEN

This 31-minute short from 1977, featured within *Kentucky Fried Movie*, is the best spoof of *Enter the Dragon* ever made. It doesn't matter if the fights are good, bad or mad — the jokes, one-liners and sitcom humor come fast and furious. The film also satirizes Asian stereotypes during a time of political incorrectness.

The mission of Agent Loo (Evan C. Kim) is to infiltrate a private island owned by the villainous Klahn (*hapkido* master Bong Soo Han) and end his evil ways. That plot allows for the most memorable moments from *Enter the Dragon* to be included: the Shaolin Temple opening fight, the cobra and dog confrontation, the holding-the-side-kick scene, the *escrima* and *nunchaku* dungeon fight, the slow-motion stomp to Ohara's head, the climactic courtyard skirmish in which Klahn calls out his fighters (all named after Korean dishes) and, of course, the clawed hand of death. Even the dialogue plays to the stereotype as Loo tells a student, "This is not a chawade ... we need total concentration ... this time with feewing."



## THEY CALL ME BRUCE?

"With my left foot, I can kick your nose. With this hand, I can poke your eyes out. With this hand, I can break your neck. Take a good look at my face — I'm an Oriental."

The premise for the delivery of those words from 1982's *They Call Me Bruce?* is this: The rise of Bruce Lee had two unintended consequences. One, it made Asian-Americans proud to be Asian. Two, it caused non-Asians in America to "fear" Asians because it was assumed that all Asians practiced martial arts.

This phobia is comically exploited in *They Call Me Bruce?* — the story of a blissful buffoon played by Johnny Yune, who uses his Asian-ness to ward off would-be attackers. He's actually a Korean who cooks noodles for the mafia and daydreams about being like Bruce Lee. When he unwittingly uses kung fu to foil a robbery, the media — to whom all Asians look alike — start calling him "Bruce." The hijinks intensify after the mafia hires him to deliver cocaine coast to coast by hiding it in his special noodle flour.



## THE LAST DRAGON

Berry Gordy's *The Last Dragon* is *The Princess Bride* of martial arts movies. Both are part romantic comedy and part adventure fantasy. Neither was a box-office success. After they were released on home video, however, both became cult classics.

Debuting in 1985, *The Last Dragon* found much of its charm in the unique hero and villain names, the Motown soundtrack and the slick fights executed on cool sets. But there was much more, including a *Star Wars*-like "light" fist-and-feet finale duel and a scene in which the hero and villain confront each other at a Bruce Lee film fest — while the hero eats popcorn with chopsticks.

The hero, of course, is "Bruce" Leroy Green, played by a newcomer named Taimak. He's on a quest to find the true meaning of martial arts. During his journey, he meets a psychotic nemesis called Sho'nuff, the Shogun of Harlem (Julius J. Carry III), and finds his soul mate, the sunny and smiling Laura (Vanity). It's a good-hearted story that's endeared itself to a legion of fans.





## REMO WILLIAMS: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Coming off the Japanese ninja craze that washed up on Pacific shores, *Remo Williams*, based on the pulp series *The Destroyer*, stormed across the United States in 1985. It features a master of *sinanju*, a fictional fighting art claimed to be the skill set of Korean assassins who were the progenitors of the ninja.

The movie opens with a cop named Sam Makin (Fred Ward) learning that his death has just been faked in an effort to recruit him into a secret crime-fighting organization. He's renamed Remo Williams and tasked with learning *sinanju* from a deadpan Korean master named Chiun, skillfully portrayed by white musical actor and dancer Joel Grey. (Grey was nominated for a Golden Globe for his performance.)

Among the movie's most memorable martial moments: Chiun's *dim-mak* strikes (hitting without touching), *chi kung* skills (running on water), and ability to dodge bullets by observing a shooter's trigger finger and moving out of the way before it completes the trigger press.

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT:** Some fans reportedly tried to mimic that gun trick, only to fail miserably. The lesson is clear: Never try to learn martial arts from movies.



★ **THEY CALL ME BRUCE?**



## BEVERLY HILLS NINJA

Ninja warriors are typically of Japanese ancestry, fit as a fiddle and dressed head to toe in black. They tend to skulk around, swords strapped to their backs, as they quietly carry out their clandestine missions. None of that applies to Haru, the character portrayed by Chris Farley in 1997's *Beverly Hills Ninja*.

Haru longs to join the ranks of Takagura Dojo and become the greatest ninja who ever lived. To get there, he needs to overcome a few obstacles: his weight, his lack of stealth skills, his clumsiness and his total ineptitude with respect to the warrior ways. Any inanimate object he touches can be used as a deadly weapon — against himself. Yet his intentions are good, and when he meets a beautiful blonde in search of a ninja to keep tabs on her devious Yakuza boyfriend, Haru claims he's a real ninja and volunteers to help. Surprisingly, Farley's histrionics and unexpected physical grace sell the action scenes, making this fish-out-of-water story engaging and hilarious.

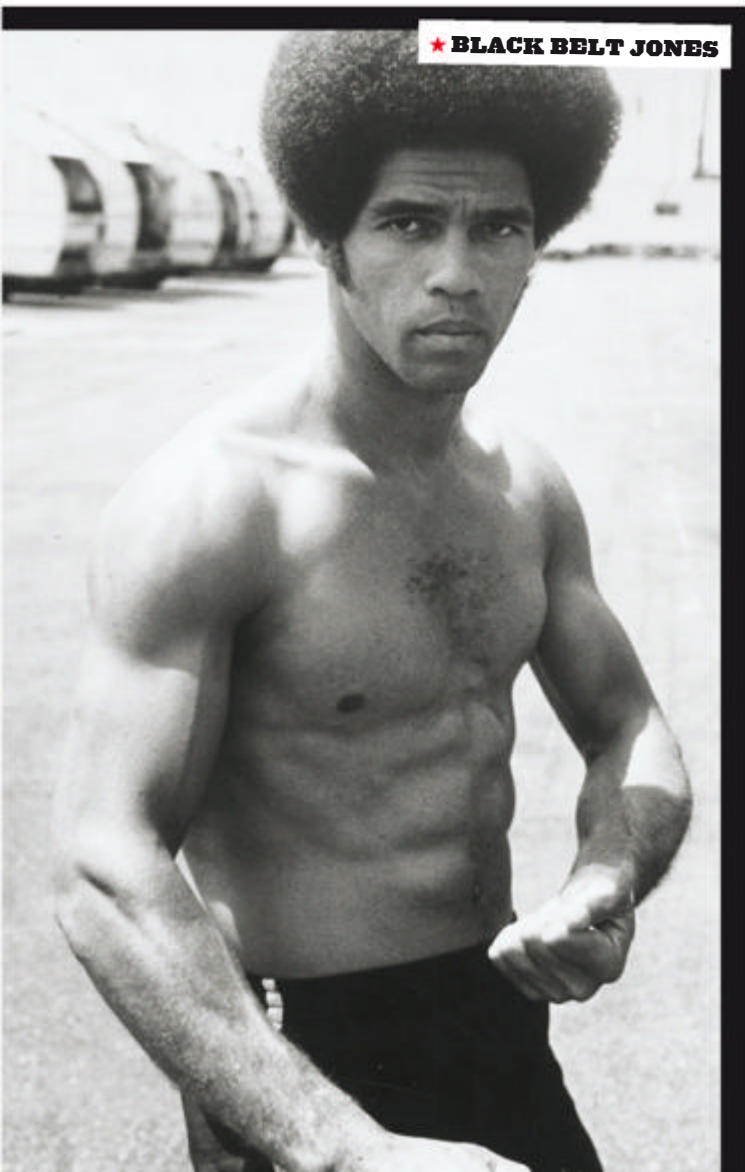


## SHANGHAI NOON

Ever since Toshiro Mifune's brief samurai-sword duels with spear-wielding American Indians in Charles Bronson's *Red Sun* (1971) and David Carradine's watered-down fights in the Western-themed *Kung Fu* (1972-1975), a certain segment of the moviegoing public has longed to see such scenes redone with skilled martial arts actors. They got their wish — plus lots of laughs — when *Shanghai Noon* was released in 2000.

After a botched train robbery, John Wayne — oops, I mean Chon Wang (Jackie Chan) — and the leader of the wannabe robbers (Owen Wilson) reluctantly team up to rescue a Chinese princess. Chan's saloon brawl, fight with the Indians, subsequent comedic interludes at an Indian village and chemistry with Wilson make *Shanghai Noon* his best American martial arts comedy. Yes, *Rush Hour* is entertaining, but Chan's on-camera rapport with Chris Tucker seemed forced and the movie wound up being more of a Tucker comedy than a Chan comedy.

★ **BLACK BELT JONES**





## KUNG POW: ENTER THE FIST

When *Five Fingers of Death* premiered in American theaters in 1972, few would have predicted that Hong Kong's slap-happy kung fu fights, over-the-top sound effects and pathetic English dubbing would become staples of American pop culture. Just when you thought those films couldn't get any "worse," Steve Oedekerk created the ultimate spoof in 2002 and dubbed it *Kung Pow: Enter the Fist*.

In essence, Oedekerk took the no-budget Jimmy Wang Yu film *Tiger & Crane Fists* (1976), did a gaudy rewrite, added some uproarious dialogue and fight scenes, and digitally replaced Yu's body with his own to flesh out the character of the Chosen One. Seeking clarity for Tonguey (a creature that lives in his tongue) and armed with woodchucks for *nunchaku*, the Chosen One faces a series of challenges that include an outlandish duel with a kung fu cow. Anything goes in this film!

**TRIVIA POINT:** In 2006 I mentioned *Kung Pow* to Wang Yu in a conversation. He said he knew nothing about it but sounded disappointed.



## THE FOOT FIST WAY

This thought-provoking movie from the production company co-owned by Will Ferrell is a series of full-contact character studies primarily focused on *taekwondo* instructor Fred Simmons (Danny McBride). The *sabum* talks about courtesy, self-control, perseverance, indomitable spirit and integrity yet falls to pieces when things don't go his way. Bumbling, boastful and at times verbally abusive, he's a mix of the good, the bad and the ugly of martial arts teachers. One day, Simmons meets his idol: Chuck "The Truck" Wallace, a former karate champ who's now a heavy-drinking movie star. From there, things go downhill fast.

The 2006 film implies that no student should blindly trust his or her teacher. It reminds us that some mentors are prone to being sleazy, dishonest, egotistical and predatory. Despite the seriousness of the topics it tackles, *The Foot Fist Way* is a comedy, one that pokes fun at a real segment of the martial arts industry.



## KUNG FU PANDA

If you don't like clichéd kung fu training sequences or themes that revolve around having faith in yourself and pursuing your dreams, *Kung Fu Panda* may not be for you. If you're not into fighting-for-food gags or students turning on their teacher before learning the error of their ways, this animated film from 2008 probably isn't for you. But if you're more like the millions around the world who laughed their heads off at its "awesomeness" and "pandamonium," you should see *Kung Fu Panda* if you haven't already.

Po (voice of Jack Black) is an overweight panda who eats when he's depressed, dreams of doing kung fu and fantasizes about meeting his childhood heroes, the Fearless Five. What's cool about Po is that although he eventually learns the secrets of the martial arts, becomes a hero and saves the day, he's still Po. His hero's journey comes full circle as his weaknesses become his strengths. Yes, he still loves to eat, but he uses that love as a means to better understand kung fu and himself. *Kung Fu Panda* is a fun film with a child-like innocence even adults can appreciate.



★ KUNG FU PANDA

Images Courtesy of DreamWorks





## BLACK DYNAMITE

After the opening scene of *Black Dynamite* — a TV commercial for Anaconda malt liquor — things begin to “ad” up, and the result is an outrageous, 8-track tape flashback to an era of political incorrectness and pimps, suckas and sistas. (In today’s PC parlance, these blaxploitation films would be called “urban movies.”)

Michael Jai White, who was *Black Belt’s* 2014 Man of the Year, plays the titular inner-city, licensed-to-kill brotha on a mission to find out who killed his brother. In the meantime, he cleans up the streets of Los Angeles and uncovers the criminal who’s been distributing a new drug that’s destroying black men. It’s a mixture of *Shaft*, *Black Belt Jones*, *Three the Hard Way* and *Dolemite* with a heaping helping of clichéd dialogue, dirty cops and bash-’em-smash-’em righteous karate action.

*Black Dynamite* became so popular after its 2009 release that it inspired an animated series that’s now in its second season on Cartoon Network. In its own irreverent way, it and the other movies on this list are helping propagate the martial arts to a generation of fans who otherwise might not be open to the message. 🐼

## REVISIT THE MOVIES YOU GREW UP ON

While writing *The Ultimate Guide to Martial Arts Movies of the 1970s*, Dr. Craig D. Reid, the author of this article, examined more than 500 fight films from around the world. The result is a full-color 288-page encyclopedia, and it’s on sale now for just \$4.99. [store.blackbeltmag.com](http://store.blackbeltmag.com)

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Dr. Craig D. Reid is a fight choreographer and film critic.

# SAN DA

A kickboxer in a blue uniform and red helmet is captured in a dynamic pose, performing a high kick. The kickboxer's right leg is extended upwards, and their left leg is planted on the ground. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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**An Introduction to the  
Chinese Art of Kickboxing  
With Throws and Takedowns**

BY ANTONIO GRACEFFO





**WHAT IT IS:** Strictly speaking, *san da* is a Chinese martial arts amalgam composed of kickboxing, throws and wrestling-style takedowns.

**WHAT IT ISN'T:** Some writers have referred to *san da* as "Chinese MMA," but that's inaccurate because it normally doesn't include ground fighting or submissions. Furthermore, in competition, *san da* fighters are permitted to clinch, but they're not allowed to hit while doing so.

**ALSO WHAT IT ISN'T:** Some people have dubbed *san da* "Chinese *muay Thai*," but that moniker doesn't do it justice. Why? Because in general, *muay Thai* stylists rely on just two leg attacks: the roundhouse kick and the push kick. Although other leg strikes exist in Thai boxing, most of the emphasis — and the scoring in the ring — can be attributed to those two moves. In contrast, *san da* encompasses an arsenal of kicks not unlike what you'd learn in *wushu*. Unbeknownst to many martial artists in the West, most *san da* fighters in China earn their chops in *wushu*.

**FIRSTHAND OBSERVATION:** When I trained at Shaolin Temple, most of the *san da* fighters I met had spent two years doing *wushu* before being allowed to take up *san da*. Hardcore fighters in the West might scoff at that notion, but *wushu* is far from a waste of time for them. The training renders the practitioners more flexible and able to kick high and fast. That means the main task that lies before them once they decide to make the leap is learning strategy and gaining ring experience.





**UFC  
Fighter  
Cung Le  
on the**

## **UTILITY OF SAN DA IN MMA**

**Q:** Did your experience competing in *san da* help prepare you for the transition to MMA?

**A:** *San da* is free-form fighting, so basically what works on the *lei tai* also works inside the cage. It's a very complete stand-up art. You need to keep an open mind and polish your boxing and wrestling skills, and focus not only on how to score points but also on correctly executing techniques that do damage. Like MMA, it's a sport that allows you to utilize all the tools you learned in the different styles you trained in.



## **SAN DA AT SHAOLIN**

► After spending two years at Shaolin Temple learning the core curriculum, students can continue with traditional Shaolin kung fu and learn the more gymnastically oriented art of *wushu*, or they can learn *san da*, a mix of kickboxing and wrestling that's recognized, even by the monks, as the most useful art for actual fighting.

— Mark Jacobs

**EMPHASIZED TECHNIQUES:** Just like the money kick in muay Thai is the roundhouse, the money kick in *san da* is the side kick. But because *san da* has a whole gamut of kicks to its name, you'll also see roundhouses, spinning back kicks, front kicks and even ax kicks in competition. Crescent kicks and some of the trickier *taekwondo*-style maneuvers can appear from time to time, depending on the background of the practitioner.

**SCORING WITH THROWS:** The thing that really differentiates *san da* from muay Thai is the takedowns. *San da* bouts are scored on points, similar to the way Chinese wrestling is. Traditionally, throws were worth one to four points. Recently, however, the rules have changed, and now the one-point throws — moves in which the thrower goes to the mat with his opponent — no longer score.

**PLATFORM FIGHTING:** In amateur *san da* bouts, four points are awarded

for throwing an opponent off the *lei tai* platform on which the fighters meet. Things are different in professional matches, though, because the action unfolds in a boxing ring instead of on a platform. That means athletes are prohibited from throwing their adversaries outside the competition area and, therefore, are ineligible to be awarded four points.

**RULE STRUCTURE:** The regulations under which pro *san da* stylists compete can vary from fight to fight. Some matches take place under *ge do* rules, which means "every way." Knee strikes, elbow strikes and even grappling may be allowed in such contests.

**FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE:** *While attending Shanghai University of Sport, I took a course titled San Da Ge Do. I found the subject matter very similar to MMA in that the coaches allowed submissions and chokes. Occasionally, professional fights operate under rules*





permitting these techniques, but they usually don't — which has caused some insiders to argue for the creation of a unified set of regulations.

**EVIDENCE OF VAGUENESS:** In China, everyone who competes in san da ge do agrees that you can't fight on the ground too long, but no one seems to know how long is "too long." The only thing they agree on is that san da ge do isn't like MMA, in which athletes can remain on the ground for as long as they stay active. In most cases, the san da ge do referee will stop the action and have the fighters stand up after about five seconds.

**FIRSTHAND FIGHTS:** *When my Shanghai University classmates and I took our final fighting exam in the San Da Ge Do class and I was able to get my opponent to the mat and choke or submit him, the ref allowed it. If I had tried to use a ground-and-pound strategy, he would have stood us up immediately.*

#### DESCENDANT OF

**CHINESE WRESTLING:** Most of san da's throws are based on moves from traditional Chinese wrestling. I say that because I've trained in both arts, and often I noted that the same techniques were present. The difference is that in one system, practitioners might grip their opponent's jacket, while in the other, they might grip with an underhook or wrap an arm around his head or neck.

**CATCHING KICKS:** Most of the world's martial arts teach a few techniques for catching an attacker's kick and sweeping his leg to take him to the ground. San da specializes in this tactic. Yes, ordinary takedowns are used, but the majority of throws follow the catching of a kick.

**FIRSTHAND CATCH:** *During my initial year at Shanghai University, an estimated 70 percent of my san da training time consisted of having a pro fighter*

*kick me while I attempted to trap his leg and execute a throw.*

**TIME LIMIT:** Under strict san da rules, once a competitor clinches or begins a throw, he has about three seconds to complete the move. Taking longer risks a referee intervention.

**WHO SHOULD STUDY:** If you're a striker, san da is a beneficial system to learn because the training will enable you to polish your leg techniques — and perfect your side kick. If you're an MMA practitioner, san da can provide valuable training in the fine art of kick catching, as well as in the ability to follow up with a throw. Yes, other styles contain techniques designed to do the same thing, but in san da, the artistry rises to another level. ✨

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Antonio Graceffo is a Black Belt contributing editor. The author gathered information for this article while training in san da at the Wushu Institute at Shanghai University of Sport, where he's pursuing a Ph.D. in martial arts.





*Arcenio Advincula at age 8*

*Photo Courtesy of Arcenio Advincula*





BY JOE PADEN

# RENAISSANCE

MAN



**ARCENIO ADVINCULA**  
IS A MASTER OF ISSHIN-RYU,  
A FOUNDING FATHER OF THE  
MARINE CORPS MARTIAL  
ARTS PROGRAM, A KNIFE  
DESIGNER AND, ABOVE ALL  
ELSE, A KARATE TEACHER!



**A**rcenio James Advincula embarked on the martial path for a reason that was far from unique. Being small in stature and of interracial heritage, the youth was a frequent victim of bullying. After one serious encounter with a group of young thugs, his father hired two former Filipino army scouts to school him in combat judo and *escrima*.

Most styles of *escrima* emphasize stick fighting, but the soldiers chose a different tactic: They trained young Advincula with tools that would send modern parents running out of the *dojo*. Specifically, they had the 8-year-old wielding a bayonet and a butcher's knife.

Another unique aspect of Advincula's martial education pertained to the role of the hands in combat. Many instructors refer to the non-weapon-bearing appendage as the "alive hand" and use it mainly to parry attacks, but Advincula's teachers called it the "sacrifice hand" in honor of its special purpose in a fight. Yes, it was used for parrying, but it was also subject to being sacrificed to forestall a cut or stab aimed at a vital organ.

## MARTIAL ARTIST

Advincula joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1957 and a year later found himself stationed on the "island of karate," aka Okinawa. On December 1, 1958, he first set foot inside the *dojo* of the legendary Tatsuo Shimabuku, thus beginning his study of *isshin-ryu* and *kobudo*.

Shimabuku had created *isshin-ryu* by combining elements he'd learned from Chotoku Kyan and Choki Motobu, who taught *shorin-*

*ryu*, with what he gleaned from his time with Chojun Miyagi, founder of *goju-ryu*. To that mix, Shimabuku added his own innovations and concepts, giving birth to a unique martial art. A quick study, Advincula became one of Shimabuku's top students.

Standing 5 feet 6 inches tall and weighing 150 pounds, Advincula possessed a stature that was similar to that of his *isshin-ryu* teacher. Kyan, Shimabuku's most influential *sensei*, was also very small, but he was renowned for his speed and maneuverability — attributes he strove to pass down to Shimabuku and, by extension, to Advincula.

The American also capitalized on the component of Shimabuku's system that revolved around cultivating power through body mechanics and control, what the old Okinawan masters called *chinkuchi*. Part of *goju-ryu*, *chinkuchi* gives the practitioner the ability to instantly transition from complete relaxation to full-body tension. That enables the student to effect the rigidity needed to penetrate targets, as

well as to absorb impacts without sustaining damage. *Chinkuchi* was the key to Shimabuku's ability to drive nails into planks with the side of his hands and Advincula's ability to easily move people twice his size and 50 years younger with just an open-hand block.

Shimabuku began referring to Advincula as Katagwa, or "Kata Man." Shimabuku selected the nickname because of the depth of his student's understanding of *kata*, his knowledge of *bunkai* and his ability to make the *bunkai* work. On the surface, a *kata* is just a string of choreographed movements, but when analyzed under the guidance of a master like Shimabuku, its essential techniques, concepts, strategies and principles are revealed.

Many instructors teach *kata*, techniques and free fighting as separate entities. In contrast, Advincula learned — and subsequently started teaching — the notion that everything comes from *kata*. From the get-go, he was told what the key elements in the *kata* were and shown how they could be used in combat.

## GRAPHIC ARTIST

Advincula played a key role in designing the unique — and controversial — *isshin-ryu* patch. It incorporated the symbol for the art, the *megami* goddess, as the centerpiece. In February 1961, Shimabuku approved the design.

Unfortunately, the language barrier that stood between Advincula and the patch maker caused the design to be rendered incorrectly. Advincula had sketched it with a vertical fist that featured a thumb on top, just like the *isshin-ryu* punch, but the patch maker placed the thumb on the side — the way other styles of Okinawan karate teach. Also incorrect was the orange border: The crest was supposed to feature a gold border to symbolize purity and the idea that karate should never be misused.

Since the error and its subsequent propagation, Advincula has worked tirelessly to get the right version of the patch out to the public. He said he's pleased that with every

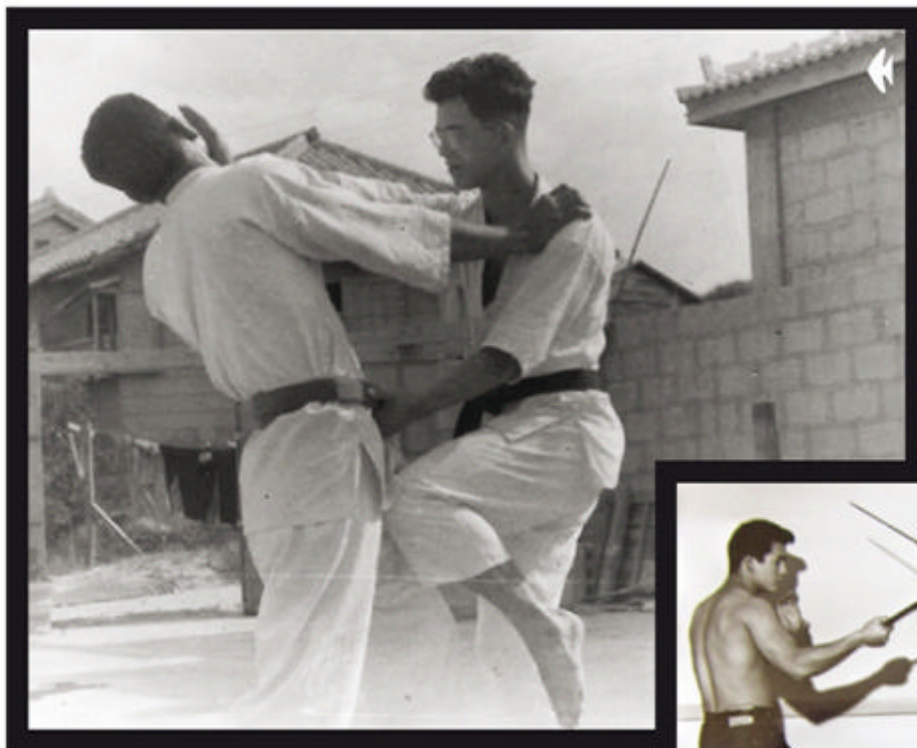


The widely distributed patch with incorrect kanji (Japanese writing) and other mistakes.



The *isshin-ryu* crest that Tatsuo Shimabuku authorized in 1961.





Arcenio Advincula practicing kata techniques with Tatsuo Shimabuku in 1959.

Arcenio Advincula and Loi Miranda, his most influential escrima instructor, practicing a technique called "defanging the snake."



passing year, more martial artists are donning the crest that Shimabuku authorized.

## OKINAWAN AMBASSADOR

Throughout the years, Advincula has enjoyed an ongoing link to Okinawa. The Marines sent him there repeatedly, civilian life saw him living there on several occasions, his Okinawan wife served as the impetus for making familial visits, and cultural tours have had him guiding groups there for the past 20 years. The resultant training ops gave Advincula a chance to pursue the study of several other Okinawan arts, including shorin-ryu, goju-ryu and *uechi-ryu*.

One style the American picked up on the island and grew to admire was *hindiandi* kung fu. Originating in Southern China, it's based on the concept of *yin/yang*. It uses two-man drills with rapid exchanges of punches, kicks and circular blocks. These moves, along with

footwork designed to close the distance quickly and techniques designed to redirect an attacker's momentum, made *hindiandi* an effective fighting system in the mind of Advincula.

Advincula was so taken with *hindiandi* that when the San Diego Chargers hired him to train their defensive linemen from 1987 to 1993, he turned to the art. "I got to experiment with them," he said. "They are at close range and in your face, so you better have your stuff down. Ninety percent of what I taught and used with them was *hindiandi*."

At age 49, Advincula had his work cut out for him with the Chargers, and it's not surprising that initially he met with opposition from the players. His response? He devised a lesson that would start with him facing the linemen in a scrimmage, after which a snap was simulated before the full contact ensued. Witnessing the intensity of what had happened to the first lineman, the second player

threatened to sue Advincula if the martial artist pulled his arm out of its socket.

From that point on, Kata Man had their respect. As they say in the Marines, example is the language all men understand.

## MILITARY MAN

Essential to understanding Arcenio Advincula is knowing that he served as a Marine for 24 years of his life. His discipline, work ethic and drive to make techniques work — no matter the conditions — stem from his time in the Corps. "When I graduated from boot camp," he said, "I was convinced I was the best fighting machine in the world and knew you [had to]

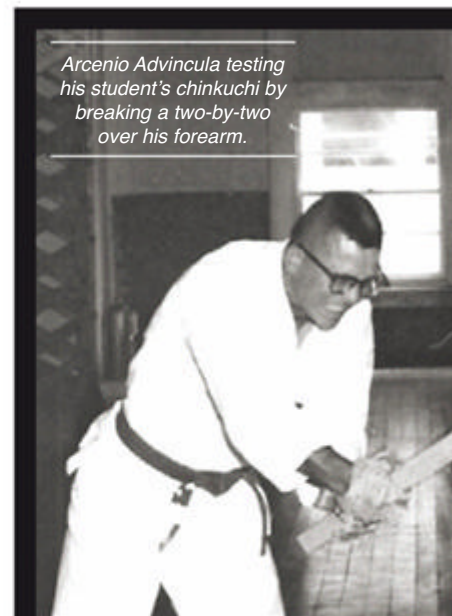
make it work no matter what you are doing, with whatever tools you have on hand."

Those are a few of the lessons that carried Advincula through 1965, the year he first saw combat in Vietnam. Subsequent tours gave him more hands-on experience, which he put to good use when he became a drill instructor in the 1970s. Advincula went out of his way to teach the recruits skills that could save their lives in combat.

The *karateka* retired from the Marines in 1981, having obtained the rank of master sergeant, but he continued to teach the Marines how to fight with blades, as well as how to be successful in hand-to-hand combat. Recognition



*Arcenio Advincula teaching martial arts techniques to the defensive line of the San Diego Chargers.*



*Arcenio Advincula testing his student's chinkuchi by breaking a two-by-two over his forearm.*



*Arcenio Advincula teaching Flesheater techniques to a soldier at Fort Carson, Colorado, in June 2013.*

for his lifelong devotion to teaching Marines came in 2001, when he was acknowledged as a founding father of the revised Marine Corps Martial Arts Program. Advincula was awarded the title of Black Belt Emeritus.

## KNIFE VISIONARY

In 1991 renowned knife maker Jim Hammond sought out Advincula in an attempt to create the ultimate combat knife. Designed to Advincula's specifications, it acquired a name when someone sustained a cut after touching the blade and quipped, "That knife is a real flesh eater!" The description stuck, and the Flesheater quickly became one of Hammond's best-selling tactical knives.

Three years later, James Byron Huggins had the Flesheater playing a pivotal role in his novel *The Reckoning*. Specifically, the blade is wielded by the book's main character, a retired Delta Force member,

and employed in multiple battles that used Advincula's knife-fighting system as a frame of reference.

For those unfamiliar with the blade-fighting system: Advincula's knife style is simple yet effective. It primarily uses the hammer grip and emphasizes attacking the opponent's weapon hand before delivering a technique to end the encounter. Based on the escrima that Advincula began learning as a child, as well as his further studies in 1960s, it also includes elements of isshein-ryu, making it an eclectic mixture of combat-proven techniques.

The Flesheater was picked up by Columbia River Knife & Tool, which began mass-producing it in 2012 under the more politically correct name "FE Model." The company also offers a plastic version of the knife so enthusiasts can train realistically and safely. Since CRKT started marketing its line of blades — as the FE7, FE9 and FE9 Trainer

— Advincula has been in demand to teach the tactics he created to make best use of this unique weapon.

## DEDICATED TEACHER

For more than 40 years, Advincula has worked the seminar circuit in North America. In 2013 alone, at age 75, the karateka traveled tens of thousands of miles to spread isshein-ryu, kobudo, escrima and military CQC, as well as something that's near and dear to his heart: Okinawan culture.

Back in 1960, an Okinawan newspaper reporter interviewed Tatsuo Shimabuku about the popularity of his style with U.S. Marines. Shimabuku didn't say that he hoped

his students would be the best fighters in the world or that he wished his art would gain popularity in the States. He said he longed for his homeland to be better understood through the practice of karate.

"If you want to understand Okinawan martial arts, then understand their culture," Advincula said. "They have a lot to teach us. Okinawan karate is not about punching, striking and kicking for sport; it's about learning to defend oneself if needed. It's about courtesy and getting along with each other and sharing and living."

In 2005 Advincula was recognized for his commitment to spreading Okinawan karate and kobudo when he received an





invitation to a government-sponsored event designed to bring attention to the island as the birthplace of those arts. More than 250 senior karate instructors from Okinawa and Japan attended, along with just five foreigners. Advincula, representing the United States and isshin-ryu, spoke about how Shimabuku had taught him almost 50 years earlier that karate was for peace and the transmission of culture.

Advincula remains committed to propagating the art of isshin-ryu, as well as the culture from which it sprouted. The 77-year-old still works

out with his students, meticulously correcting their moves while wowing them with his speed, power and fluidity and trying to convey the message that karate is about much more than fighting. "If only one [student] listens," he said, "the effort was worth it." ✖

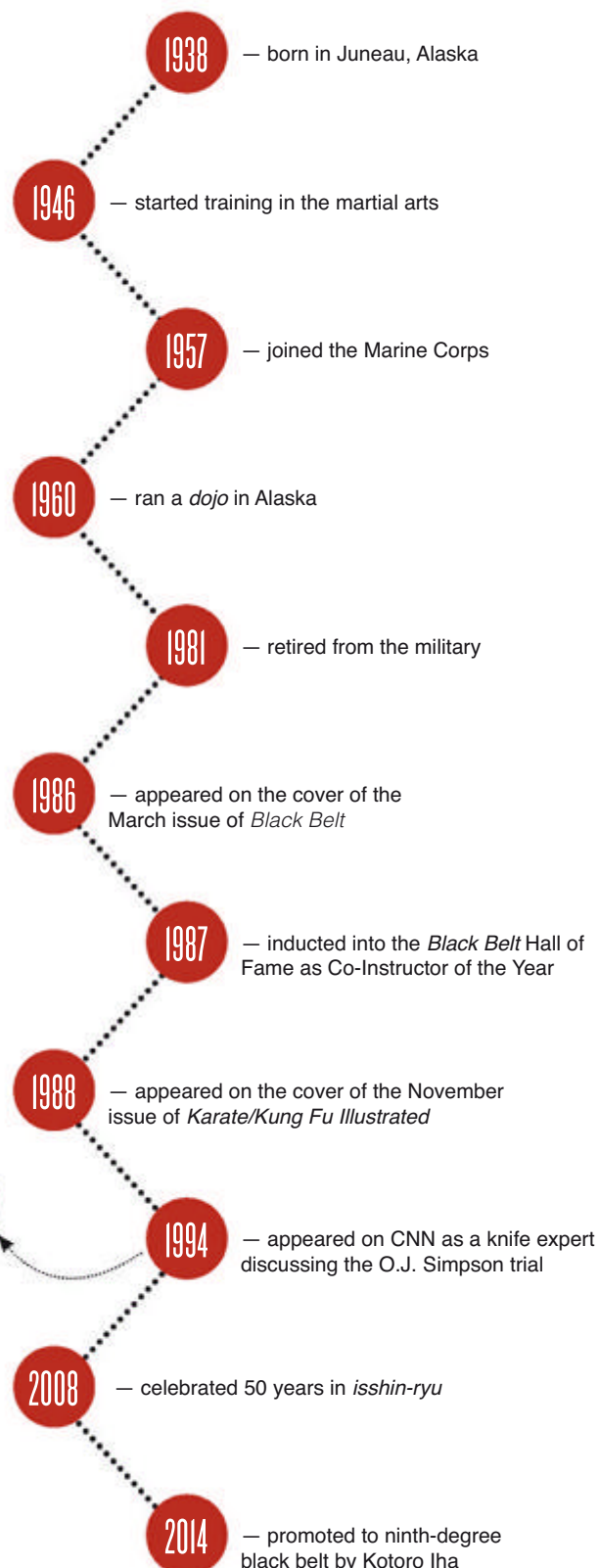
● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Joe Paden is a Maryland-based martial arts instructor. His 30-plus years in isshin-ryu have left him with a sixth-degree black belt under Arcenio Advincula.



The Flesheater knife designed to Arcenio Advincula's specifications and manufactured by Columbia River Knife & Tool.

## ARCENIO ADVINCULA TIMELINE





## RAMP UP YOUR REALITY-BASED SELF-DEFENSE WITH A TRAIN-CATION THAT TEACHES LIFESAVING SKILLS

BY BARRY EISLER



I have a long-standing interest in reality-based self-defense — for the usual reasons and because I write action thrillers for a living and like to keep them realistic. As a result, over the years I've gotten to do some pretty awesome and eclectic training: in a covert position with the CIA; in Asian arts like judo and Western ones like boxing and wrestling; and in a variety of private courses, many of which you've no doubt read about or seen advertised right here in *Black Belt*. Unlike my teachers, I'm no expert, but I do think I'm in a reasonably good position to compare the different forms of training I've had — both their objectives and their teaching methods.

In the interest of brevity, I'm going to focus on reality-based courses and not on the traditional arts or my government training. And I'm going to focus on the primary emphasis of those courses. Not a single course I've taken has been about only one aspect of violence, and in fact, there's typically a lot of overlap, but here I want to tease out individual emphases rather than commonalities. By way of analogy, yes, there are strikes and kicks in traditional judo, but I don't think *atemi waza* is what judo is primarily about. So for anyone tempted to say, "But doesn't that course also include? ..." the answer is probably yes — but that thing is, in my experience, not the essence of the course, and it's the essence of each one that I think is most relevant.

**EXPERT:** Massad Ayoob

**COURSE:** Lethal Force Institute 1

**WEBSITE:** [massadayoobgroup.com](http://massadayoobgroup.com)



I don't think Massad Ayoob is still teaching the LFI courses, but his new MAG courses seem similar. Ayoob is a firearms expert, and the introductory LFI course I took focused on the mechanics of combat shooting and the law of self-defense. The latter is particularly important and frequently overlooked in favor of the sexier stuff. But if you think dropping the bad guy and then getting bankrupted by litigation and possibly going to prison constitutes effective self-defense, then I'd just say we have somewhat different conceptions. Personally, I think being safe entails physical and legal elements, and LFI 1 was a great introduction to both.

The instruction consisted of classroom and range work. In the class, we discussed a variety of hypotheticals related to the physical, emotional and legal aspects of using lethal force: what makes sense for home defense, what you do under adrenal stress, what happens to your home when the police show up after even a justified shooting and so on. On the range, we learned the mechanics of good shooting: smooth draw, aggressive stance, gorilla grip, front sight on the target, press the trigger. I went into the course a barely adequate range shooter and emerged a competent one.





**EXPERT:** Tony Blauer

**COURSE:** Personal Defense Readiness

**WEBSITE:** [tonyblauer.com](http://tonyblauer.com)



The core of Tony Blauer's course is the ambush — more specifically, training you to take what you're going to do anyway and extend it into something tactical. He calls his system SPEAR, or Spontaneous Protection Enabling Accelerated Response. The idea is to create a bridge between your genetically determined startle/flinch reaction to an ambush on the one hand and your training and higher-level tactics on the other. The bridge is designed to keep you in the fight and buy you time to access your higher-level training. That said, the SPEAR is a formidable self-defense technique. Blauer hit me more than a few times, and I was amazed at how much force the move delivered even though he was holding back and I was wearing torso protection.

In the course, Blauer didn't ignore or dispute the value of tactical awareness in preventing an ambush or the value of martial arts skills in defeating an attacker. Again, it's a question of emphasis, and here the emphasis was on, "OK, despite your training and your awareness, you just got ambushed. What do you do?"

If you get ambushed, by definition you won't be in your Thai boxing stance or whatever; you'll be flinching, which is what your body is programed to do when startled. So it makes sense to condition your reactions to start from the



response your body will revert to, rather than from the trained response you want to arrive at.

The training methodology was for the most part slow-motion movement, the philosophy being that you'll likely move in reality the way you do in training — except for speed. If you throw punches past your partner's head or pull them before they hit your partner's body, there's a risk you'll do the same when the excrement hits the fan. But there's no danger that in a real encounter, juiced with adrenaline, you'll move in slow motion. So it makes sense to do a certain amount of training with correct movement in slow-mo.





**EXPERT:** Wim Demeere  
**COURSE:** Private lessons  
**WEBSITE:** [wimdemeere.com](http://wimdemeere.com)



Wim Demeere offers no formal courses; instead, he focuses on one-on-one training. I've spent two weeks with him, and he's hands down one of the best martial artists and teachers I know. He hits like a liquid freight train, and he has a knack for helping people understand the principles and acquire the skills they need to generate that kind of power.

One of the things I loved about training with Demeere was how carefully he customized the curriculum to the needs of the client. For example, my first martial art was high-school wrestling, and my deepest self-defense muscle memory stems from that experience. Demeere was great about using that muscle memory as a foundation, tweaking and expanding it so that instead of just gaining position, I can do damage. For example, he taught me to turn a common circle drag into something significantly more effective. Why try to rewire a person when you can slightly alter what he's inclined to do anyway?

What Blauer did on a genetic/biological level in his course, Demeere did on an experiential/muscle-memory level in this one. Either way, the approach made a lot of sense.



**EXPERT:** Tim Larkin  
**COURSE:** Target Focus Training  
**WEBSITE:** [targetfocustraining.com](http://targetfocustraining.com)



The focus at TFT is physically responding to asocial violence. It isn't primarily a course about awareness, de-escalation, evasion, etc. It's about the most effective ways to destroy the human machine and prevent it from functioning. Like Blauer's course and Rory Miller's training (see below), everything was done in slow motion, akin to the way operators learn to use firearms on the range.

Tim Larkin and head instructor Chris Ranck-Buhr showed they have a knack for communicating concepts by analogy. A small example: When they taught a stomp kick, they told me to imagine I'm trying to crush an empty soda can. For some reason, this kind of common-sense knowledge can desert us when we envision stomping a neck or a pelvic girdle, and into the vacuum rushes something unhelpfully martial-arty. No. The way you deliver maximum force to crush a can is the same way you deliver maximum force to crush a throat. We already know this, and Larkin and Ranck-Buhr were great about preventing anything from obscuring that knowledge. It was the teaching and context that really made this course special for me — the techniques themselves are probably as old as the human species, and I recognized many of them from classic texts like Col. Rex Applegate's *Kill or Get Killed* and W.E. Fairbairn's *Get Tough: How to Win in Hand-to-Hand Fighting*, both based on World War II combatives.





Another noteworthy aspect of the TFT course was that in some ways, “self-defense” would be a misnomer for it. Larkin said he wants people to get in the mindset of attacking back. He explained the concept succinctly with a question: Where do you see “defensive wounds” except on a corpse? To drive home that point, he showed us a series of videos of his people attempting to go unarmed against common knife attacks, and the only thing that offered semi-decent odds was a violent counterattack.

Like Blauer, Larkin used a number of real-life videos, mostly taken from CCTV cameras. The violence was sobering and thought-provoking, and the clips led to a lot of good discussions. Larkin wasn’t interested in theory; he concentrated on what’s empirically known to happen. Example: We didn’t train to counter a roundhouse kick — not because a roundhouse kick has never occurred in the history of mugging but because you’re more likely to be sucker-punched. We focused on what’s most likely to happen, not on everything that could happen. With enough time, sure, cover the rare situations, too, but we live in a world of limited resources. Do you have fire insurance for your home, or do you have asteroid insurance?

**EXPERT:** Marc MacYoung

**COURSE:** No Nonsense Self-Defense

**WEBSITE:** [nonnenseselfdefense.com](http://nonnenseselfdefense.com)



If I had to distill out the most fundamental aspect of what Marc MacYoung teaches in his books, videos and seminars, it would be situational awareness. While today any half-decent self-defense instructor will at least pay lip service to the importance of awareness, MacYoung was a pioneer in popularizing the concept.

I remember reading about it in his first book *Cheap Shots, Ambushes, and Other Lessons* back in 1989 when I was being taught many of the same principles in CIA counterterror training. I was struck by what an amazingly cost-effective means of self-defense situational awareness provides. After all, what gives you the better odds of survival: fighting your way out of the ambush, or spotting it in advance and simply avoiding it?

Many of the principles I cover in a talk I sometimes give at writing conferences (Personal Safety Tips From Assassin John Rain) I learned from MacYoung, and if you know that character from my book series, you’ll see a lot of MacYoung’s influence. One key point is to work backward starting with the threat. If you’re in the CIA, that might be a terrorist kidnapping or assassination. If you’re a civilian, it might be a mugging, carjacking or burglary. Whatever it is, you put yourself in the shoes of the opposition: “If I were going to mug someone, where would be a good place to do it?” Then you amp up your alertness anytime you’re passing through such an environment. If you’re in the CIA, this might mean a choke point on your way to and from work. If you’re a civilian, it might mean the edges of a shopping-mall parking lot or an ATM at night.

In my experience, it’s easier to practice awareness and avoidance than it is to train in a martial art or with firearms, and because avoiding the ambush is so much less dangerous and costly than fighting, situational awareness should be your outermost layer of defense. Remember the words of Mr. Miyagi in *The Karate Kid*: “Best block, no be there.”





**EXPERT:** Rory Miller

**COURSE:** Chiron Training

**WEBSITE:** [chirontraining.com](http://chirontraining.com)



The emphasis in Chiron Training is on effective physical responses to asocial violence. The methodology varies: lectures and Q&A's about the difference between social and asocial violence, discussions of real-world scenarios and slow-motion practice of gross-motor techniques with role-playing attackers.

One of the things I most admire about Rory Miller as a teacher is how carefully he distinguished between the objective and the subjective. For example, he is by temperament and training an infighter, and to some degree, his preferences influenced his teaching. But he was also aware of and upfront about those preferences, and they didn't limit or otherwise affect his approach. Also, come on — at some point, you're likely to be infighting, so don't you want to know some sneaky stuff like the rabbit punch and non-obvious parts of the body you can latch onto to cause pain and damage? These were some of my favorite aspects of training with Miller.

One other thing I liked about the course: Miller is a normal guy, not a bulging mass of muscle. There was a notable emphasis on actions that will work for a petite woman who's up against a much larger, stronger opponent. As with pretty much everything else I'm discussing here, I wouldn't say this aspect was unique to Miller's course, but his approach was exceptionally informed by it. That's smart because if you're 6 foot 5 and weigh 250 pounds, you probably need self-defense training a little less than does a 120-pound woman. So it probably makes more sense to teach to the petite woman than it does to teach to the large man.



**EXPERT:** Peyton Quinn

**COURSE:** Rocky Mountain Combat Applications Training

**WEBSITE:** [rmcat.com](http://rmcat.com)



The primary purpose of the course was to teach people how to manage the threat and reality of asocial violence while under adrenal stress. To this end, students learned a limited roster of gross-motor skills (palm heels, elbow strikes, ax kicks, etc.) and practiced them against padded attackers during realistic scenarios intended to induce adrenal stress. Unless you're Hannibal Lecter, violence is always accompanied by an adrenaline dump, and adrenaline has huge effects on performance — degradation of fine-motor skills, tunnel vision, suppressed hearing, etc. — so if you're training in the absence of adrenaline, you're missing a critical aspect of what reality has in store for you.

If you're thinking, "Come on, what kind of adrenaline response can you get in a classroom environment?" I can say only that it works. After all, haven't you ever had to deal with an adrenaline dump from something as mundane as public speaking? There are a lot of things short of real violence that can bring on the adrenaline, and the ambiguity and uncertainty Peyton Quinn deliberately injected into the classroom scenarios, the intimidating appearance of the "bulletman" assailants, the realistic way they "woofed" and otherwise tried to verbally mess us up, and the performance anxiety we got in front of a classroom full of strangers were all more than enough.

Quinn summed up his methodology this way: "Give another instructor six months to train a group of swimmers. The instructor can do anything he wants during those six months — teach any strokes, recommend any diet, implement any fitness routine — except for putting his students in the water. Give me two days to teach only the most basic strokes — but I can put my students in the water. Drop everyone into the ocean, and more of my swimmers will make it to shore."

In addition to the unarmed work, we spent two days on knife and stick defense and on handgun training using Simunitions. All of it was eye-opening. Yes, adrenaline does play havoc with your fine-motor skills and judgment when weapons are involved, and yes, the Tueller Drill is a damn good guide.







**EXPERTS:** Staff of Rift Recon

**COURSE:** Art of Escape

**WEBSITE:** [riftrecon.com](http://riftrecon.com)



This is another training op that proved a little broader than what you'd ordinarily think of as self-defense, but personal safety can involve elements beyond just countering violence — including subjects such as urban escape, evasion and survival. Consider: How do you defeat handcuffs, flexicuffs or duct tape? Do you know anything about disguise, caching and surreptitious movement? Rift Recon's three-day Art of Escape was the best training I've had on these topics since my days with the CIA. The organization is putting together an intermediate course now, and I'm looking forward to taking that one, too.

In case you're wondering: No, I didn't learn how to become Harry Houdini in three days. It was a lot like any other self-defense course in that I learned the rudiments and found I could perform them under classroom conditions pretty quickly. From there, it came down to practice. So while I now know the fundamental mechanics of opening a pair of handcuffs with a paper clip and can do so reliably with my wrists cuffed in front of me, becoming adept with my hands double-locked behind me will require a lot more practice. I don't consider this to be a shortcoming of the Art of Escape course. It's just an inherent limitation that should be understood. The principles are sound; how effective you want to get is a question of continued practice and training.

### NEVER-ENDING JOURNEY

At this point, it should be clear that these courses complemented one another. With MacYoung, I learned to think like the opposition, develop my situational awareness accordingly and avoid the ambush. If my awareness and

avoidance skills fail, I know from training with Blauer how to short-circuit the ambush. And I know from training with Blauer, Larkin and Miller how to effectively counterattack. I learned from Demeere how to hit hard. I know from training with Quinn how to handle the unavoidable adrenaline dump. If I'm carrying, I know from my time with Ayoob how to shoot effectively (and legally). If something weird happens and I wind up getting kidnapped despite all this, I know from Rift Recon that my best chance of escape is during the capture, not during captivity, and I have the skills to get out of those flexicuffs, run and avoid recapture.

There's a ton I'm leaving out, and I suspect the people I've talked about in this article might quibble with some of my descriptions and point out that they teach lots of other things, too. That's fair, and again I don't mean to imply that any of the courses I've discussed teach only what I've mentioned, but rather that what I've mentioned strikes me as the core curriculum. Every one of these courses has been useful to me, and all of them have complemented each other well.

I'm very aware that there are other impressive reality-based courses — Kelly McCann of Crucible and Rob Pincus of ICE Training, I'm thinking of you! And I know there are obvious gaps in my training, too — for example, wilderness medicine — which I'd like to find a way to close. So with luck, at some point I'll get to do a follow-up to this article. For now, I hope this discussion helps you discover the training that will be most valuable for you, matching the nature of what's out there with your own self-defense objectives. ✕

*Barry Eisler also attended the Aboriginal Living Skills School's Self-Reliance Symposium, by Cody Lundin, former co-host of Dual Survival on Discovery Channel. Read the report on [blackbeltmag.com](http://blackbeltmag.com). For more information about the author, visit [barryeisler.com](http://barryeisler.com).*





# POINT

**THE FACTS** Behind the  
Unfortunate Death of Eric Garner  
**COULD CHANGE** the Way Police  
Officers Approach Defensive Tactics  
— and **THE WAY MARTIAL**  
**ARTISTS TRAIN** for Self-Defense!

BY SCOT CONWAY

In July 2014, Phoenix resident Bryan Danielson and his wife Brianna arrived at their home and interrupted two men who'd broken in. The criminals tried to flee, but Bryan caught one of them and held him in a rear-naked choke. The 22-year-old burglar was taken into custody by police. No injuries were reported.

Also in July 2014, New York police officers took Eric Garner into custody. Video of the incident shows a confrontation in which Garner was upset with the initial contact and asked to be left alone. When Officer Daniel Pantaleo tried to handcuff him, Garner swatted his arms away, asking to not be touched. The officer then grabbed Garner around the

neck from behind to take him down. The two men slammed into a window, and Garner was brought to the ground. He subsequently died.

Immediately after Garner's death, chokeholds were thrown into the limelight. His last words, "I can't breathe," became a rallying cry for protesters across America. The phrase was printed on T-shirts and chanted by demonstrators. The video of the encounter has been watched by millions.

## ANALYSIS AFTER THE FACT

There's a popular belief that Eric Garner was choked to death, that he died from asphyxiation at the site of his arrest. In rebuttal, many have noted that speaking aloud is a sure sign you're breathing. However, it does indicate that he was having trouble breathing. It was later determined that Garner was alive at

*Immediately after Garner's death, chokeholds were thrown into the limelight. His last words, "I can't breathe," became a rallying cry for protesters across America.*



Photo Courtesy of A. Katz/Shutterstock.com

the time of the arrest and that his death occurred while in transit to the hospital, reportedly from heart failure.

The New York City Medical Examiner reported the cause of death to be the result of "compression of neck (chokehold), compression of chest and prone positioning during physical restraint by police." No damage to the windpipe or neck was found. Contributing factors were listed as asthma, heart disease and obesity.

In the case of Bryan Danielson, a young man was captured and held with a choke without injury. In the case of Eric Garner, a man was taken into custody but later

died. In part because there are many other reported cases of death resulting from or occurring shortly after law-enforcement officers have applied chokes, it's become a national issue. Because so many martial arts include choking techniques, this no doubt will become an issue in our community, as well. Practitioners around the world are reconsidering self-defense strategies that rely on chokes, which until now had been regarded as safe when properly applied.

#### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TECHNIQUES

"Chokehold" has become a generic term for any move that

entails wrapping an arm around the neck. In martial arts (and law enforcement), we make distinctions between the various neck techniques, often categorizing them as follows.

■ **AIR CHOKE:** This is a technique that restricts the recipient's ability to breathe. An example is an armbar choke in which the forearm is placed, intentionally or not, across the trachea (windpipe). The decision to use an air choke should not be made lightly because of the danger of damaging or even collapsing the trachea.

■ **BLOOD CHOKE:** This is a technique that restricts the flow of blood to and/or from the brain.

*Since 1882, the International Judo Federation has kept records on the application of shime waza, which refers to the category of choking techniques rather than a particular choke. The records show that no deaths from choking have occurred.*



Photo by Robert Reiff



An example is the rear-naked choke. Dangers associated with blood chokes include the arteries not reopening when the hold is released (possibly because of cholesterol on the arterial walls) and the user maintaining the hold for too long.

■ **NECK HOLD:** This technique does not meaningfully restrict breathing or blood flow. Rather, it controls the person by using the neck as a point of contact. An example is a conventional head lock. Dangers include cranking the neck to a point that causes subluxation (misalignment), as well as improper application that results in an accidental choke (especially an accidental air choke).

While these distinctions are evident to martial artists, to the general public, they all look like chokes. Even if an arm triangle is secured around the neck and held loosely enough to act as a neck hold, it still looks like a chokehold and bystanders may regard it as such.

**CONSIDER:** In response to the uproar over chokeholds, law enforcement in King County, Washington, focused on teaching a “lateral vascular neck restraint.” Basically, deputies were taught to avoid using air chokes and focus on blood chokes instead. They thought they’d solved the problem, but a representative of a local chapter of the NAACP disagreed.

“A chokehold by another fancy name is still a chokehold,” said Gerald Hankerson of the Seattle King County NAACP. “Whatever the name may be, it is really another attempt by an officer to put his arm around someone’s neck. When we see someone with their arms wrapped around someone’s neck, that is a chokehold.”

Many law-enforcement agencies changed their policies to limit or forbid chokeholds after an incident that happened in Los Angeles in the early 1990s. James Mincey led officers on a high-speed chase, and once the police caught up with him, they placed him in a chokehold while taking him into custody. He died as a result. It was the 16<sup>th</sup> death

attributed to a blood choke in seven years.

A more recent incident occurred in the civilian world. In 2013 New Jersey resident Charles Derr got into an altercation with Matthew Stilwell while consuming alcohol. Derr ended up putting Stilwell in a rear-naked choke until Stilwell went limp. Derr thought his foe was unconscious. When he hadn’t moved as of the next day, Derr called 911, at which point Stilwell was pronounced dead. Medical tests confirmed the cause of death was strangulation due to chokehold.

### JUDO AS EXAMPLE

When studying the effects of chokeholds, it’s essential to look at judo. Since 1882, the International Judo Federation has kept records on the application of *shime waza*, which refers to the category of choking techniques rather than a particular choke. The records show that no deaths from choking have occurred.

Why do police and the occasional civilian seem to kill people with chokeholds when a century of choke use in judo has resulted in no deaths? Why do we not see fatalities from chokes used in competition, in training and in more fights?

Combat-sports physician Dr. Joseph Estwanik notes the presence of other issues in these fatal incidents. Many of those who died were affected by other medical conditions. Garner, for example, suffered from heart disease and asthma. In many of the cases, medical authorities have concluded that if the victim had been healthy, the choke would not have caused death.

Another factor is drug use/intoxication. Many who died from chokeholds were under the influence of drugs. However, it’s not clear exactly how the drugs contributed to the deaths. In the aforementioned New Jersey incident, both men had been drinking. A correlation may exist as to impaired states and chokehold death, but again causation is not clear. The New

## DEATH ON THE MAT

Although judo and Brazilian *jiu-jitsu* haven’t recorded any deaths caused by improper chokes, not all martial arts are that lucky. In Paris in 1954, a student of a Vietnamese martial art applied a chokehold on his instructor — with fatal results.

The instructor reportedly told the student to use all his strength to hold the choke because he wanted to demonstrate his ability to resist and counter. The defense failed, and the student maintained the choke for several minutes. The instructor died on the mat.

Jersey case could have been precipitated by a drunken man doing the choking or by a drunken man being choked.

### FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO COMPLICATIONS

Not all the chokehold deaths involving law enforcement were complicated by drug use, intoxication or contributing medical conditions. Of the 13 cases of death that occurred after the police used chokes, five incidents didn’t appear to have any contributory causes. The victims died as a result of the hold, period. Because more than one-third of the deaths don’t fit the medical-condition or drug-use pattern, it appears that some other factor is affecting the outcome.

What might it be? This is a crucial question because these days, more martial artists than ever practice grappling, whether it’s judo, Brazilian *jiu-jitsu* or MMA.

The first and most obvious way in which a choke can kill is by holding it too long. All pressure should cease as soon as the opponent goes limp, Estwanik says. That’s because chokes trigger some serious reactions in the body, including unconsciousness (which should always be treated), possible shock, minor convulsions and the release of hormones (which can remain in the system for hours).

**RULE OF THUMB:** Typically, if a choke is released as soon as the opponent goes limp, recovery will begin in 10 or 15 seconds. If the person doesn’t regain consciousness within 30 seconds, action must be taken. The subject may have blacked out or “grayed out.” The latter term refers to being partly unconscious. The subject is losing awareness and control of his body, but he’s still partially awake.

What else could cause death by chokehold? A study conducted in the jails of San Diego County found that 85 percent of new inmates were under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of intake. If this number also applies to those who commit violent acts, there could be

a substantial risk that martial artists who are forced to defend themselves will have to do so against someone who's under the influence.

Estwanik and Dr. E. Karl Koiwai, who studied chokehold use when it became controversial after a string of deaths in the 1970s and '80s and had his findings published in the *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, note that while martial artists might be able to tell if an attacker has ingested an intoxicating substance, they have no way of knowing the medical condition of the attacker. Therefore, it's essential to ensure that whenever someone is rendered unconscious with a choke, medical care is administered or summoned if recovery hasn't started by the half-minute mark.

There's another factor that hasn't been considered in previous research. It may explain why deaths can occur on the street when chokeholds are used yet almost never happen in *dojo* training or competition: In the martial arts, a referee is usually present. He or she is an experienced, skilled third party whose job it is to monitor the match. The ref (or instructor) knows what to expect once a choke has been applied and is there to ensure the technique is released immediately.

## THE WAY FORWARD

So what solutions are available to mitigate the problem of lethal chokeholds? Obviously, there's no way to stage a referee at every encounter between a police officer and a resisting suspect. However, it is possible for law-enforcement officers to receive additional training in the proper application of chokes. If regular practice — like that undertaken by most martial artists — isn't possible, frequent refresher courses are the next best thing.

Unfortunately, even extra training won't eliminate one charac-

teristic of street encounters: They usually involve untrained opponents who resist wildly.

When a police officer attempts to take a suspect into custody using a chokehold, the subject likely will have no experience being choked. That can lead to violent attempts to defend himself, possibly because he thinks such techniques are always lethal. He may slam himself — and the choker — into a wall or window. He may twist, shove, grab, fall or fight. His actions may inadvertently turn a blood choke into a more dangerous air choke or cause the officer to use more force to maintain a neck hold. Add adrenaline, emotional intensity and a possible altered state of consciousness, and the opponent is likely to resist long past any mark of safety. With no referee to call it, minor convulsions or nearly limp stumbles might feel like even more resistance.

**⚠️ WARNING:** This applies as much to civilian martial artists as it does to law-enforcement officers. If you're forced to apply a choke on a person who's unfamiliar with grappling, you should expect him to react by moving in erratic and dangerous ways. That could morph what you intended to be a restraint or submission into an unintentionally lethal technique.

In view of what's been happening in law enforcement, the best solution may be to simply forbid the use of chokes by police officers. In martial arts training and competition, such drastic action isn't necessary because, as I mentioned, a referee or experienced instructor is always present. However, martial artists who intend to rely on chokes for self-defense are likely to face the same unpredictable reaction that police officers face if they attempt a choke on an untrained person. ✖️

# FIRST + AID FOR CHOKES

Although some martial arts teach revival techniques, Dr. Joseph Estwanik recommends using these three steps whenever a person is not recovering as expected from a choke:



➤ Lay the person on his or her back.



➤ Tilt the head back to clear the airway.



➤ Elevate the legs to promote blood flow to the upper body.

If spontaneous recovery of breathing and pulse hasn't occurred in 30 seconds, assume problems exist. Check the person's heartbeat and breathing, call for help and apply first aid as appropriate. Never assume that an unresponsive person is "sleeping" and will recover if left alone.

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** A licensed attorney, Scot Conway, Ph.D., is the master instructor at Guardian Quest Dojo in Spring Valley, California. For more information, visit [GQDojo.com](http://GQDojo.com).



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Measuring 8.9 inches long with a 3.8-inch blade, this limited-run design from Emerson Knives is sure to appeal to collectors, as well as those looking for a “hard use” cutting tool. The hardness rating of the blade, in fact, is RC 57-59, which explains why it holds an edge so well. Two blade finishes are available: stonewashed and black. Both models sport Ernest Emerson’s engraved signature and a unique serial number on the blade.

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## “NEVER SETTLE” CLOTHING LINE

Martial arts gear and apparel company Whistlekick recently unveiled its line of “Never Settle” clothing. The collection includes tees, hoodies and sweatpants that bear the motivational motto.

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## THAI CUP 2.0

This groin guard from Swedish company lobloo boasts significant advantages over ordinary cups. Its protective qualities stem from the high-strength polymer, which is so tough it comes with a “no crack” money-back guarantee. The included straps offer a fit that minimizes movement inside compression shorts and other garments. The ventilated cup comes with a wash-and-carry bag for a quick rinse or proper laundering.

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Knowing how much martial artists depend on carrying solutions for training and travel, our tester spent a year beating the daylights out of Datsusara’s Battlepack Pro. After it survived numerous intercontinental flights — often as checked baggage — and hauled an assortment of abrasive contents, he gave it a thumbs up. The durable, 100-percent hemp-bodied backpack has 13 useable compartments, including two for carrying liter-size water bottles and a rear pouch that can accommodate a hydration bladder.

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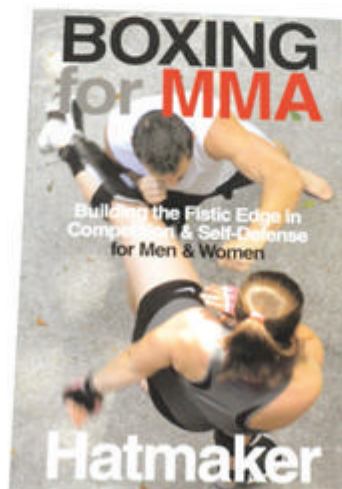
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## BOXING FOR MMA

Subtitled *Building the Fistic Edge in Competition & Self-Defense for Men & Women*, this book by *Black Belt* contributing editor Mark Hatmaker starts by teaching the requisite striking skills — in case you need a refresher. Then the 134-page text launches into stance, footwork and combinations, as well as the best ways to incorporate all of the above into MMA competition.

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# Century Martial Arts Debuts Innovative Headgear

by Elizabeth Gosney

In July 2014, the world got its first glimpse of Tegu headgear, the newest addition to the Century lineup. It began more than eight years ago as no more than a simple idea: Improve martial arts headgear.

For six years, Century's headgear proposal was an on-again, off-again venture. With a pile of discarded sketches and no clear direction, it seemed like a lost cause. Then, in January 2012, Tibor Siklosi joined Century as the director of innovation and spearheaded the project along with fellow research-and-development team members Kurt Hafeken and Jeffrey Woodson.

"We spent the better part of two days just digging through all the designs to see what we could pick up and start with," Siklosi said. "We hoped that after six years of trying, there'd be something there that we could use."

What they found, however, was a list of requirements that had gradually grown to include more than 50 benefits and features, compounding the intricacies of an already challenging process. "So we basically said, 'Let's just clean the slate,'" Siklosi said.

The slate cleaning entailed re-examining the drawbacks of headgear already on the market. "Foam-dipped headgear, which is the standard, has a patent that is 40 years old," Hafeken said. "Nothing has really changed for that long. Other sports and other indus-

tries have progressed, but martial arts has been the same."

While Hafeken and Siklosi agreed that dipped-foam headgear was functional and necessary, there was also room for change. Martial artists commonly reported that dipped foam could be hot and slippery and require readjustment during sparring. The team experienced this firsthand while training — which convinced them to focus on three key requirements: comfort, secure fit and coverage.

Two-dimensional renderings followed, with influences coming from unlikely places. They started with the basic concept of wrestling headgear, which is known for staying in place during workouts. Then Woodson acquired a construction hard hat and Coast Guard helmet.

"The observation he brought to the table was that you can hit yourself on the head with a wrench while wearing a hard hat and you don't feel it at all," Siklosi explained. "The impact is dispersed by the shell."

They found that the helmet's rigid construction and internal suspension system acted to diffuse impact energy better than foam alone (which mainly absorbs impact but does not disperse it), and the suspension system aided breathability through minimal skin contact.

"What we ended up doing was elevating the headgear, like a hard hat would,

and putting the hard-hat [concept] sandwiched in the middle of the foam," Siklosi said.

With a solid foundation and clear direction, a 2-D drawing was completed, and Woodson was tasked with creating the 3-D rendering. This proved to be the most demanding part of the product's development.

"It is easy to lose the style and detail of a design while engineering a product for manufacture," Woodson said. "We were exceedingly conscious of this fact, and it took many revisions to get the finished design to live up to the original design art."

The patience and perseverance of the Century team paid off, however, as the first physical prototype of the multi-plated headgear arrived and was made into preproduction samples for testing.

"We went through five rounds of testing [at the Wayne State facility in Detroit]," Siklosi said. "And every time, we had to come back and fix something."

The team tweaked and reworked the headgear after sessions in Detroit, at Century's in-house facility and at Jackson-Winkeljohn MMA gym in New Mexico. The adjustments ranged from foam thickness and density to arch height, strap placement and even fabric piping.

After more than two years of nonstop research and development, the correct ratios and components combined to fulfill the requirements. Now officially known as Tegu — deriving its name from a lizard with armor-like scales — the headgear is not just an update; it's also a breakthrough. Five individual pieces combine to provide a secure, customizable fit. The patented arched-plate and foam technology absorb and disperse impact energy, and elevated sections dramatically increase airflow and comfort.

"There's something extraordinary about how this came about," Siklosi said. "All of our minds produced something that there's no way just one of us could have done alone."

This product is just the beginning for Tegu technology. Century is already working on a face-mask version of the headgear, plus guards for feet and hands. 🦎

For more information on Tegu, visit [CenturyMartialArts.com](http://CenturyMartialArts.com).



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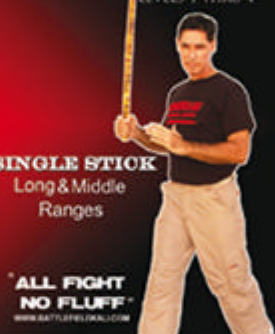
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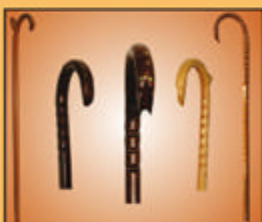
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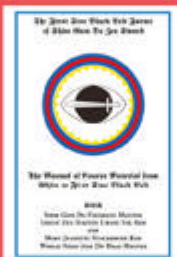
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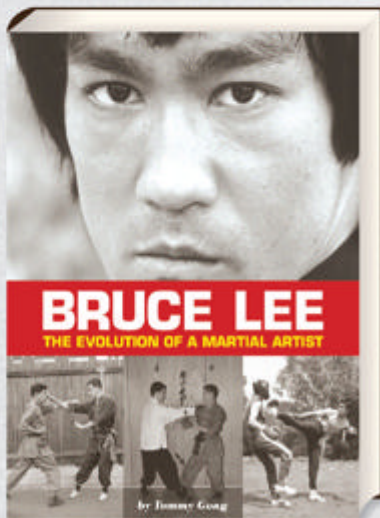


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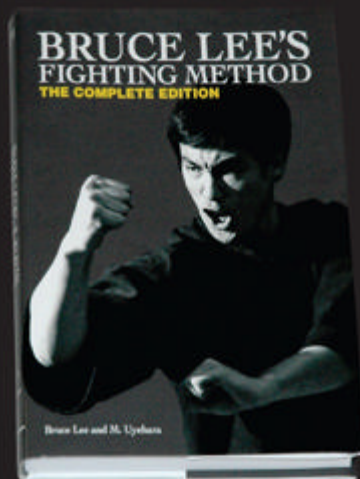


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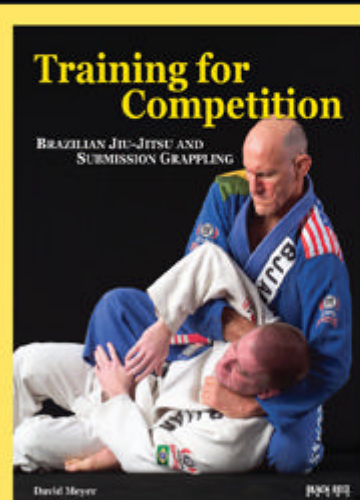


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# From the Archives

Vol. 15, No. 11, \$1

The 167th issue of *Black Belt* was dated November 1977. It was 76 pages long and featured *taekwondo* instructor Jae Hyon on the cover.

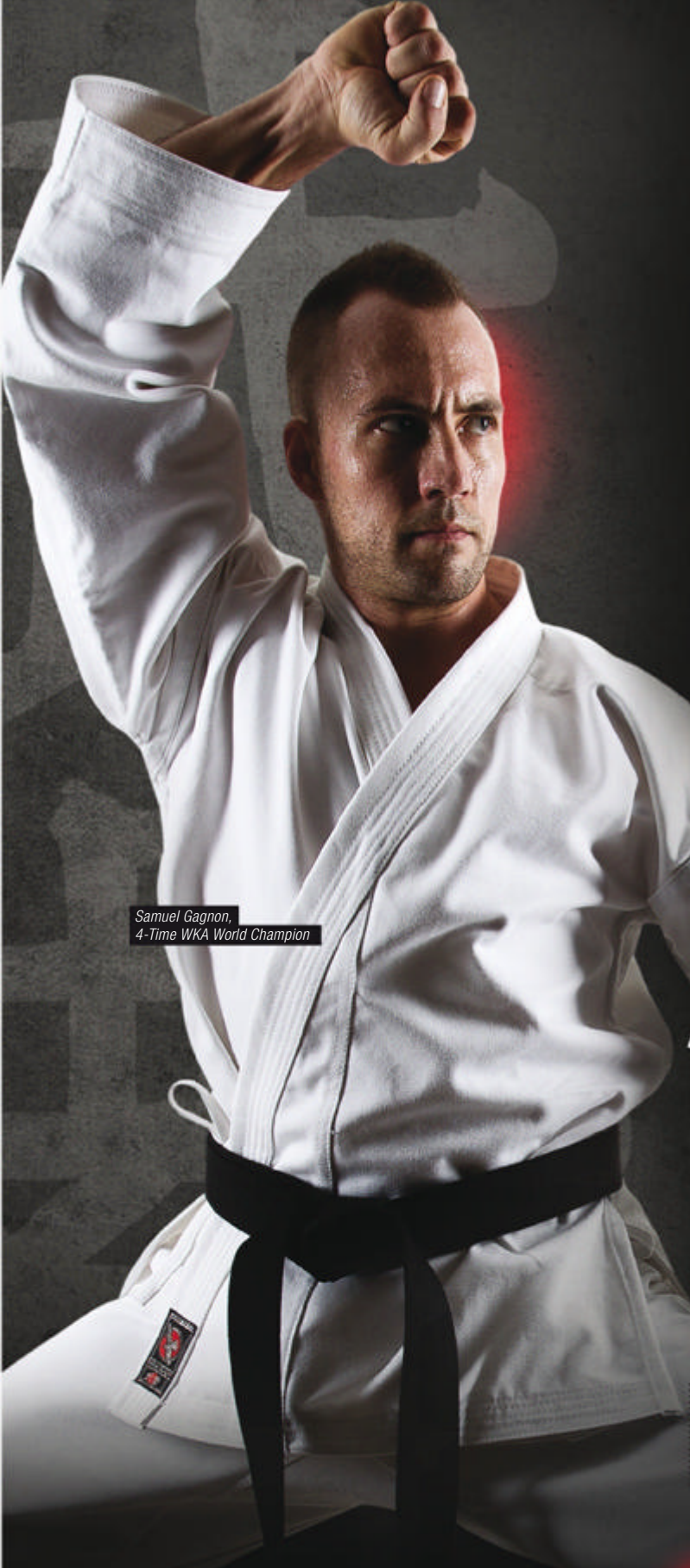
- “I can teach [a student] to fight in a tournament, but it is not the whole thing — only a small part,” says Minnesota-based *taekwondo* instructor Jae Hyon, who started learning the art in North Korea. “I try to teach an overall philosophy and techniques so the student can be a complete martial artist. The philosophy is that you know winning over yourself is more important than winning over someone else physically.”
- Remy Presas introduces modern *arnis* to the *Black Belt* readership. “The more significant innovation I have made on *arnis* is the principle that even without [sticks or knives], the hand remains an effective defense or combat weapon.”
- One of Presas’ best-known students is Dean Stockwell, an actor who appeared in, among other films, *Long Day’s Journey Into Night*. (Decades later, Stockwell would co-star in *Quantum Leap* and *Battlestar Galactica*.)
- Eight Israeli martial artists are barred from competing at the World Karate Championships in Tokyo because of “security concerns.”
- *Black Belt* profiles David Chaa-nine, once a resident of Beirut but now a *taekwondo* teacher in San Diego. “There are many reasons why I left my country,” he says. “One is because I didn’t want to be in the army. I don’t want to kill or be killed.” Here’s to peace.
- In “The Key to *Ki*,” *aikido* master Koichi Tohei attempts to offer clarity: “*Ki* is part of the physical laws of nature. It is a universal energy force, not the sole gift of a few. It is not found in just one

location. It is like electricity where the world is full of positive-negative charged elements. But you need a power plant to make use of them. The body is like a power plant.”

- Kwang Sik Myung and the World Hapkido Association, founded in 1975, hold a three-day training camp in Michigan.
- “Sedentary jobs kill people.” So says Jamaica, New York-based *shotokan* instructor Fred Hamilton when asked for lifestyle advice pertaining to diet and exercise.
- Century Martial Arts starts marketing kicking jeans with flare legs.
- Reportedly the first English-language book on smashing pine, *The Dynamic Art of Breaking Techniques* by Pu Gill Gwon is released. Fast-forward four decades — Gwon’s follow-up book *Taegeuk: The New Forms of Tae Kwon Do* is still in print.
- To prepare for possible skirmishes with male politicians in parliament, members of the Japan Women’s Party undergo karate training. Why the precautions? “What is unique about our party is that we are not trying to achieve equality but women’s supremacy over men,” says Misako Enoki, party prez. “If [our candidates] are elected and feel a disadvantage in getting laws unbeneficial to women revised, then they will resort to physical action and knock down male lawmakers.” Where was YouTube when we needed it? 🐼

(Note: Back issues are not for sale.)





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